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THE IDLER.

BY

The AUTHOR of the RAMBLER.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

WITH

ADDITIONAL ESSAYS.

VOL. II.

" Duplex libelli dos eſt, quod riſum movet,
" Et quod prudenti vitam conſilio monet."

PHAEDRUS.

Χάρις μικροῖσι.

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CONTENTS

OF

VOLUME the SECOND.

N° 53. *MISCHIEFS of good Company,* 1
54. *Mrs.* SAVECHARGES's *Complaint,* 7
55. *Author's Mortifications,* 14
56. *Virtuoſos whimſical,* 20
57. *Character of* SOPHRON *the Prudent,* 25
58. *Expectations of Pleaſure fruſtrated,* 31
59. *Books fall into neglect,* 35
60. MINIM *the Critick,* 39
61. MINIM *the Critick,* 47
62. RANGER's *Account of the Vanity of Riches,* 53
63. *Progreſs of Arts and Language,* 59
64. RANGER's *Complaint concluded,* 64
65. *Fate of Poſthumous Works,* 69
66. *Loſs of ancient Writings,* 74
67. *Scholar's Journal,* 78
68. *Hiſtory of Tranſlations,* 86
69. *Hiſtory of Tranſlations,* 91
70. *Hard Words defended,* 96
71. DICK SHIFTER's *rural Excurſion,* 101
72. *Regulation of Memory,* 109
73. TRANQUIL's *Uſe of Riches,* 114
74. *Memory rarely deficient,* 119
75. GELALEDDIN *of* Baſſora, 124
76. *Falſe Criticiſms on Painting,* 130
77. *Eaſy Writing,* 136
78. STEADY, SNUG, STARTLE, SOLID, *and* MISTY, 141
79. *Grand Style of Painting,* 148

N° 80. *Ladies Journey to* London, Page 154
81. INDIAN's *Speech to his Countrymen*, 160
82. *The true idea of Beauty*, 165
83. SCRUPLE, WORMWOOD, STURDY, *and* GENTLE, 173
84. *Biography how beſt performed*, 178
85. *Books multiplied by uſeleſs Compilations*, 184
86. *Miſs* HEARTLESS's *Want of a Lodging*, 189
87. *Amazonian Bravery revived*, 195
88. *What have ye done?* 201
89. *Phyſical Evil moral Good*, 206
90. *Rhetorical Action conſidered*, 212
91. *Sufficiency of the* ENGLISH *Language*, 217
92. *Nature of Cunning*, 222
93. SAM SOFTLY's *Hiſtory*, 228
94. *Obſtructions of Learning*, 232
95. TIM WAINSCOT's *Son a fine Gentleman*, 237
96. HACHO *of* Lapland, 243
97. *Narratives of Travellers conſidered*, 248
98. SOPHIA HEEDFUL, 254
99. ORTOGRUL *of* Baſra, 258
100. *The Good Sort of Woman*, 263
101. OMAR's *Plan of Life*, 270
102. *Authors inattentive to themſelves*, 275
103. *Horrour of the Laſt.* 280

ADDITIONAL ESSAYS.

Eſſay on Epitaphs, 287
Diſſertation on the Epitaphs written by POPE, 302
Bravery of the ENGLISH *Common Soldiers*, 326

THE

IDLER.

N° 53. *Saturday, April* 21.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

I HAVE a Wife that keeps Good Company. You know that the word Good varies its meaning according to the value ſet upon different qualities in different places. To be a Good Man in a College, is to be learned; in a Camp, to be brave; and in the City, to be rich. By Good Company in the place which I have the misfortune to inhabit, we underſtand not only thoſe from whom any good can be learned, whether Wiſdom or Virtue;

or by whom any good can be conferred, whether Profit or Reputation. Good Company is the company of thoſe whoſe Birth is high, and whoſe Riches are great, or of thoſe whom the Rich and Noble admit to familiarity.

I AM a Gentleman of a fortune by no means exuberant, but more than equal to the wants of my family, and for ſome years equal to our deſires. My Wife, who had never been accuſtomed to ſplendour, joined her endeavours to mine in the ſuperintendence of our œconomy; we lived in decent plenty, and were not excluded from moderate pleaſures.

BUT ſlight cauſes produce great effects. All my happineſs has been deſtroyed by change of place; Virtue is too often merely local; in ſome ſituations the air diſeaſes the body, and in others poiſons the mind. Being obliged to remove my habitation, I was led by my evil genius to a convenient houſe in a ſtreet where many of the Nobility reſide. We had ſcarcely ranged our furniture, and aired our rooms, when my Wife began to grow diſcontented, and to wonder what the neighbours would think when they ſaw ſo few chairs and chariots at her door.

HER

HER acquaintance who came to ſee her from the quarter that we had left, mortified her without deſign, by continual enquires about the Ladies, whoſe houſes they viewed from our windows. She was aſhamed to confeſs that ſhe had no intercourſe with them, and ſheltered her diſtreſs under general anſwers, which always tended to raiſe ſuſpicion, that ſhe knew more than ſhe would tell; but ſhe was often reduced to difficulties, when the courſe of talk introduced queſtions about the furniture or ornaments of their houſes, which, when ſhe could get no intelligence, ſhe was forced to paſs ſlightly over, as things which ſhe ſaw ſo often, that ſhe never minded them.

To all theſe vexations ſhe was reſolved to put an end, and redoubled her viſits to thoſe few of her friends, who viſited thoſe who kept Good Company; and, if ever ſhe met a Lady of Quality, forced herſelf into notice by reſpect and aſſiduity. Her advances were gegerally rejected; and ſhe heard them, as they went down ſtairs, talk how ſome creatures put themſelves forward.

SHE was not diſcouraged, but crept forward from one to another; and, as perſever-

ance will do great things, ſapped her way unperceived, till, unexpectedly, ſhe appeared at the Card-table of Lady *Biddy Porpoiſe*, a lethargick Virgin of ſeventy-ſix, whom all the families in the next ſquare viſited very punctually when ſhe was not at home.

THIS was the firſt ſtep of that elevation to which my wife has ſince aſcended. For five months ſhe had no name in her mouth but that of Lady *Biddy*, who, let the world ſay what it would, had a fine underſtanding, and ſuch a command of her temper, that, whether ſhe won or loſt, ſhe ſlept over her cards.

AT Lady *Biddy's* ſhe met with Lady *Tawdry*, whoſe favour ſhe gained by eſtimating her earrings, which were counterfeit, at twice the value of real diamonds. When ſhe had once entered two houſes of diſtinction, ſhe was eaſily admitted into more, and in ten weeks had all her time anticipated by parties and engagements. Every morning ſhe is beſpoke, in the ſummer, for the gardens; in the winter, for a ſale; every afternoon ſhe has viſits to pay, and every night brings an inviolable appointment,

or an Aſſembly in which the beſt company in the town were to appear.

You will eaſily imagine that much of my domeſtick comfort is withdrawn. I never ſee my wife but in the hurry of preparation, or the languor of wearineſs. To dreſs and to undreſs is almoſt her whole buſineſs in private, and the ſervants take advantage of her negligence to increaſe expence. But I can ſupply her omiſſions by my own diligence, and ſhould not much regret this new courſe of life, if it did nothing more than transfer to me the care of our accounts. The changes which it has made are more vexatious. My Wife has no longer the uſe of her underſtanding. She has no rule of action but the faſhion. She has no opinion but that of the people of quality. She has no language but the dialect of her own ſet of company. She hates and admires in humble imitation; and echoes the words *charming* and *deteſtable* without conſulting her own perceptions.

If for a few minutes we ſit down together, ſhe entertains me with the repartees of Lady *Cackle*, or the converſation of Lord *Whiffler*

and Miſs *Quick*, and wonders to find me receiving with indifference ſayings which put all the company into laughter.

By her old friends ſhe is no longer very willing to be ſeen, but ſhe muſt not rid herſelf of them all at once; and is ſometimes ſurprized by her beſt viſitants in company which ſhe would not ſhew, and cannot hide; but from the moment that a Counteſs enters, ſhe takes care neither to hear nor ſee them: they ſoon find themſelves neglected and retire, and ſhe tells her Ladyſhip that they are ſomehow related at a great diſtance, and that as they are good ſort of people ſhe cannot be rude to them.

As by this ambitious union with thoſe that are above her, ſhe is always forced upon diſadvantageous compariſons of her condition with theirs, ſhe has a conſtant ſource of miſery within; and never returns from glittering Aſſemblies and magnificent Apartments but ſhe growls out her diſcontent, and wonders why ſhe was doomed to ſo indigent a ſtate. When ſhe attends the Ducheſs to a ſale, ſhe always ſees ſomething that ſhe cannot buy;

buy; and, that ſhe may not ſeem wholly inſignificant, ſhe will ſometimes venture to bid, and often makes acquiſitions which ſhe did not want at prices which ſhe cannot afford.

WHAT adds to all this uneaſineſs is, that this expence is without uſe, and this vanity without honour; ſhe forſakes houſes where ſhe might be courted, for thoſe where ſhe is only ſuffered; her equals are daily made her enemies, and her ſuperiors will never be her friends.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

N° 54. *Saturday, April* 28.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

YOU have lately entertained your admirers with the caſe of an unfortunate Huſband, and thereby given a demonſtrative proof you are not averſe even to hear Appeals and terminate Differences between Man and Wife; I therefore take the liberty to preſent

you with the Caſe of an injured Lady, which, as it chiefly relates to what I think the Lawyers call a Point of Law, I ſhall do in as juridical a manner as I am capable, and ſubmit it to the conſideration of the learned Gentlemen of that Profeſſion.

Imprimis. In the ſtyle of my marriage Articles, a Marriage was *had and ſolemnized* about ſix months ago, between me and Mr. *Savecharges*, a Gentleman poſſeſſed of a plentiful fortune of his own, and one who, I was perſuaded, would improve, and not ſpend mine.

Before our marriage Mr. *Savecharges* had all along preferred the ſalutary exerciſe of walking on foot, to the diſtempered eaſe, as he terms it, of lolling in a chariot: but notwithſtanding his fine panegyricks on walking, the great advantages the infantry were in the ſole poſſeſſion of, and the many dreadful dangers they eſcaped, he found I had very different notions of an Equipage, and was not eaſily to be converted, or gained over to his party.

An Equipage I was determined to have, whenever I married. I too well knew the diſpoſition of my intended conſort to leave the providing

providing one intirely to his honour, and flatter myſelf Mr. *Savecharges* has, in the articles made previous to our marriage, *agreed to keep me a Coach*; but leſt I ſhould be miſtaken, or the Attornies ſhould not have done me juſtice in methodizing or legalizing theſe half dozen words, I will ſet about and tranſcribe that part of the agreement, which will explain the matter to you much better than can be done by one who is ſo deeply intereſted in the event; and ſhew on what foundation I build my hopes of being ſoon under the tranſporting, delightful denomination of a faſhionable Lady, who enjoys the exalted and much-envied felicity of bowling about in her own Coach.

" And further the ſaid *Solomon Savecharges*, " for divers good cauſes and conſiderations " him hereunto moving, hath agreed, and doth " hereby agree, that the ſaid *Solomon Save-* " *charges* ſhall and will, ſo ſoon as convenient- " ly may be after the ſolemnization of the " ſaid intended Marriage, at his own proper " coſt and charges, find and provide *a certain* " *vehicle or four-wheel carriage, commonly call-* " *ed or known by the name of a Coach*; which " ſaid vehicle or wheel-carriage, ſo called or

" known by the name of a Coach, ſhall be " *uſed and enjoyed* by the ſaid *Sukey Modiſh*, his " intended wife" [pray mind that, Mr. *Idler*] " at ſuch times and in ſuch manner as ſhe " the ſaid *Sukey Modiſh* ſhall think fit and con- " venient."

SUCH, Mr. *Idler*, is the agreement my *paſſionate Admirer* entered into; and what the *dear frugal Huſband* calls a performance of it remains to be deſcribed. Soon after the ceremony of ſigning and ſealing was over, our wedding-cloaths being ſent home, and, in ſhort, every thing in readineſs except the Coach, my own ſhadow was ſcarce more conſtant than my paſſionate Lover in his attendance on me: wearied by his perpetual importunities for what he called a completion of his bliſs, I conſented to make him happy; in a few days I gave him my hand, and, attended by *Hymen* in his ſaffron-robes, retired to a country-ſeat of my huſband's, where the Honey-moon flew over our heads ere we had time to recollect ourſelves, or think of our engagements in town. Well, to town we came, and you may be ſure, Sir, I expected to ſtep into my Coach on my arrival here; but, what was my ſurprize and diſap-

diſappointment, when, inſtead of this, he began to ſound in my ears, "That the intereſt of money was low, very low; and what a terrible thing it was to be incumbered with a little regiment of ſervants in theſe hard times." I could eaſily perceive what all this tended to, but would not ſeem to underſtand him; which made it highly neceſſary for Mr. *Savecharges* to explain himſelf more intelligibly; to harp upon and proteſt he dreaded the expence of keeping a Coach. And, truly, for his part, he could not conceive how the pleaſure reſulting from ſuch a convenience could be any way adequate to the heavy expence attending it. I now thought it high time to ſpeak with equal plainneſs, and told him, as the fortune I brought fairly entitled me to ride in my own Coach, and as I was ſenſible his circumſtances would very well afford it, he muſt pardon me if I inſiſted on a performance of his agreement.

I APPEAL to you, Mr. *Idler*, whether any thing could be more civil, more complaiſant, than this? And would you believe it, the creature in return, a few days after, accoſted me in an offended tone, with, "Madam, I can now tell "you your Coach is ready; and ſince you are

"ſo paſſionately fond of one, I intend you the "honour of keeping a pair of horſes.—You "inſiſted upon having an article of Pin-money, "and Horſes are no part of my agreement." Baſe, deſigning wretch!—I beg your pardon, Mr. *Idler*, the very recital of ſuch mean, ungentleman-like behaviour fires my blood, and lights up a flame within me. But hence, thou worſt of monſters, ill-timed Rage, and let me not ſpoil my cauſe for want of temper.

Now though I am convinced I might make a worſe uſe of part of the Pin-money, than by extending my bounty towards the ſupport of ſo uſeful a part of the brute creation; yet, like a true-born Engliſhwoman, I am ſo tenacious of my rights and privileges, and moreover ſo good a friend to the Gentlemen of the Law, that I proteſt, Mr. *Idler*, ſooner than tamely give up the point, and be quibbled out of my right, I will receive my Pin-money, as it were, with one hand, and pay it to them with the other; provided they will give me, or, which is the ſame thing, my Truſtees, encouragement to commence a ſuit againſt this dear frugal Huſband of mine.

And of this I can't have the leaſt ſhadow of doubt, inaſmuch as I have been told by very good authority, it is ſome way or other laid down as a rule, "* *That whenever* the Law "doth give any thing to one, it giveth impli- "edly whatever is neceſſary for the taking and "enjoying the ſame." Now I would gladly know what enjoyment I, or any Lady in the kingdom, can have of a coach without horſes? The anſwer is obvious—None at all! For as Serj. *Catlyne* very wiſely obſerves, "Though a "coach has wheels, to the end it may thereby "and by virtue thereof be enabled to move; "yet in point of utility it may as well have "none, if they are not put in motion by means "of its vital parts, that is, the horſes."

And therefore, Sir, I humbly hope you and the learned in the Law will be of opinion, that two certain animals, or quadruped creatures, commonly called or known by the name of horſes, ought to be annexed to, and go along with the Coach.

Sukey Savecharges.

* Coke on Littleton.

N° 55. *Saturday, May* 5.

To the IDLER.

Mr. IDLER,

I HAVE taken the liberty of laying before you my complaint, and of deſiring advice or conſolation with the greater confidence, becauſe I believe many other Writers have ſuffered the ſame indignities with myſelf, and hope my quarrel will be regarded by you and your Readers as the common cauſe of Literature.

HAVING been long a Student, I thought myſelf qualified in time to become an Author. My enquiries have been much diverſified and far extended, and not finding my genius directing me by irreſiſtible impulſe to any particular ſubject, I deliberated three years which part of knowledge to illuſtrate by my labours. Choice is more often determined by accident than by reaſon: I walked abroad one morning with a curious Lady, and by her enquiries and obſer-

obſervations was incited to write the Natural Hiſtory of the County in which I reſide.

NATURAL Hiſtory is no work for one that loves his chair or his bed. Speculation may be purſued on a ſoft couch, but nature muſt be obſerved in the open air. I have collected materials with indefatigable pertinacity. I have gathered glow-worms in the evening, and ſnails in the morning; I have ſeen the daiſy cloſe and open, I have heard the owl ſhriek at midnight, and hunted inſects in the heat of noon.

SEVEN years I was employed in collecting Animals and Vegetables, and then found that my deſign was yet imperfect. The ſubterranean treaſures of the place had been paſſed unobſerved, and another year was to be ſpent in Mines and Coal-pits. What I had already done ſupplied a ſufficient motive to do more. I acquainted myſelf with the black inhabitants of metallic caverns, and, in defiance of damps and floods, wandered through the gloomy labyrinths, and gathered Foſſils from every fiſſure.

AT laſt I began to write, and as I finiſhed any ſection of my book, read it to ſuch of my friends

friends as were moſt ſkilful in the matter which it treated. None of them were ſatisfied; one diſliked the diſpoſition of the parts, another the colours of the ſtyle; one adviſed me to enlarge, another to abridge. I reſolved to read no more, but to take my own way and write on, for by conſultation I only perplexed my thoughts and retarded my work.

The Book was at laſt finiſhed, and I did not doubt but my labour would be repaid by profit, and my ambition ſatisfied with honours. I conſidered that Natural Hiſtory is neither temporary nor local, and that though I limited my Enquiries to my own County, yet every part of the earth has productions common to all the reſt. Civil Hiſtory may be partially ſtudied, the revolutions of one nation may be neglected by another, but after that in which all have an intereſt, all muſt be inquiſitive. No man can have ſunk ſo far into ſtupidity as not to conſider the properties of the ground on which he walks, of the plants on which he feeds, or the animals that delight his ear or amuſe his eye, and therefore I computed that univerſal curioſity would call for many Editions of my Book, and that in five years I ſhould

gain

gain fifteen thouſand pounds by the ſale of thirty thouſand copies.

WHEN I began to write I inſured the houſe, and ſuffered the utmoſt ſolicitude when I entruſted my book to the Carrier, though I had ſecured it againſt miſchances by lodging two tranſcripts in different places. At my arrival, I expected that the patrons of learning would contend for the honour of a Dedication, and reſolved to maintain the dignity of letters, by a haughty contempt of pecuniary ſolicitations.

I TOOK lodgings near the houſe of the Royal Society, and expected every morning a viſit from the Preſident. I walked in the Park, and wondered that I overheard no mention of the great Naturaliſt. At laſt I viſited a Noble Earl, and told him of my Work; he anſwered, that he was under an engagement never to ſubſcribe. I was angry to have that refuſed which I did not mean to aſk, and concealed my deſign of making him immortal. I went next day to another, and, in reſentment of my late affront, offered to prefix his name to my New Book. He ſaid, coldly, that *he did not underſtand thoſe things*; another thought *there were*

were too many Books; and another would *talk with me when the Races were over.*

BEING amazed to find a Man of Learning ſo indecently ſlighted, I reſolved to indulge the philoſophical pride of retirement and independence. I then ſent to ſome of the principal Bookſellers the plan of my Book, and beſpoke a large room in the next tavern, that I might more commodiouſly ſee them together, and enjoy the conteſt, while they were outbidding one another. I drank my coffee, and yet nobody was come; at laſt I received a note from one, to tell me, that he was going out of town; and from another, that Natural Hiſtory was out of his way; at laſt there came a grave man, who deſired to ſee the Work, and, without opening it, told me, that a Book of that ſize *would never do.*

I THEN condeſcended to ſtep into ſhops, and mention my Work to the Maſters. Some never dealt with Authors; others had their hands full; ſome never had known ſuch a dead time; others had loſt by all that they had publiſhed for the laſt twelvemonth. One offered to print my Work, if I could procure Sub-

Subſcriptions for five hundred, and would allow me two hundred copies for my property. I loſt my patience, and gave him a kick, for which he has indicted me.

I CAN eaſily perceive, that there is a combination among them to defeat my expectations; and I find it ſo general, that I am ſure it muſt have been long concerted. I ſuppoſe ſome of my friends, to whom I read the firſt part, gave notice of my deſign, and, perhaps, ſold the treacherous intelligence at a higher price than the fraudulence of Trade will now allow me for my Book.

INFORM me, Mr. *Idler*, what I muſt do; where muſt Knowledge and Induſtry find their recompence, thus neglected by the High, and cheated by the Low? I ſometimes reſolve to print my Book at my own expence, and, like the Sibyl, double the price; and ſometimes am tempted, in emulation of *Raleigh*, to throw it into the fire, and leave this ſordid generation to the curſes of poſterity. Tell me, dear *Idler*, what I ſhall do.

I am, Sir, &c.

N° 56.

N° 56. *Saturday, May* 21.

THERE is ſuch difference between the purſuits of men, that one part of the inhabitants of a great city lives to little other purpoſe than to wonder at the reſt. Some have hopes and fears, wiſhes and averſions, which never enter into the thoughts of others, and enquiry is laborioufly exerted to gain that which thoſe who poſſeſs it are ready to throw away.

To thoſe who are accuſtomed to value every thing by its uſe, and have no ſuch ſuperfluity of time or money as may prompt them to unnatural wants or capricious emulations, nothing appears more improbable or extravagant than the love of Curioſities, or that deſire of accumulating trifles, which diſtinguiſhes many by whom no other diſtinction could have ever been obtained.

He that has lived without knowing to what height deſire may be raiſed by vanity, with what rapture baubles are ſnatched out of the hands of rival collectors, how the eagerneſs of one raiſes eagerneſs in another, and one worthleſs purchaſe makes a ſecond neceſſary, may, by paſſing a few hours at an auction, learn more than can be ſhewn by many volumes of Maxims or Eſſays.

The Advertiſement of a Sale is a ſignal which at once puts a thouſand hearts in motion, and brings contenders from every part to the ſcene of diſtribution. He that had reſolved to buy no more, feels his conſtancy ſubdued; there is now ſomething in the Catalogue which completes his Cabinet, and which he was never before able to find. He whoſe ſober reflections inform him, that of adding collection to collection there is no end, and that it is wiſe to leave early that which muſt be left imperfect at laſt, yet cannot with-hold himſelf from coming to ſee what it is that brings ſo many together, and when he comes is ſoon overpowered by his habitual paſſion; he is attracted by rarity, ſeduced by example, and inflamed by competition.

WHILE the ſtores of Pride and Happineſs are ſurveyed, one looks with longing eyes and gloomy countenance on that which he deſpairs to gain from a richer bidder; another keeps his eye with care from ſettling too long on that which he moſt earneſtly deſires; and another, with more art than virtue, depreciates that which he values moſt, in hope to have it at an eaſy rate.

THE novice is often ſurprized to ſee what minute and unimportant diſcriminations increaſe or diminiſh value. An irregular contortion of a turbinated ſhell, which common eyes paſs unregarded, will ten times treble its price in the imagination of philoſophers. Beauty is far from operating upon collectors as upon low and vulgar minds, even where beauty might be thought the only quality that could deſerve notice. Among the ſhells that pleaſe by their variety of colours, if one can be found accidentally deformed by a cloudy ſpot, it is boaſted as the pride of the Collection. China is ſometimes purchaſed for little leſs than its weight in gold, only becauſe it is old, though neither leſs brittle, nor better painted than the modern; and brown China is caught up with extaſy, though no reaſon

ſon can be imagined for which it ſhould be preferred to common veſſels of common clay.

THE fate of Prints and Coins is equally inexplicable. Some Prints are treaſured up as ineſtimably valuable, becauſe the impreſſion was made before the Plate was finiſhed. Of Coins the price riſes not from the purity of the metal, the excellence of the workmanſhip, the elegance of the legend, or the chronological uſe. A piece, of which neither the inſcription can be read, nor the face diſtinguiſhed, if there remain of it but enough to ſhew that it is rare, will be ſought by contending nations, and dignify the treaſury in which it ſhall be ſhown.

WHETHER this curioſity, ſo barren of immediate advantage, and ſo liable to depravation, does more harm or good, is not eaſily decided. Its harm is apparent at the firſt view. It fills the mind with trifling ambition; fixes the attention upon things which have ſeldom any tendency towards virtue or wiſdom; employs in idle inquiries the time that is given for better purpoſes; and often ends in mean and diſhoneſt practices, when deſire increaſes by indulgence beyond the power of honeſt gratification.

THESE

THESE are the effects of curioſity in exceſs; but what paſſion in exceſs will not become vicious? All indifferent qualities and practices are bad if they are compared with thoſe which are good, and good if they are oppoſed to thoſe that are bad. The pride or the pleaſure of making Collections, if it be reſtrained by prudence and morality, produces a pleaſing remiſſion after more laborious ſtudies; furniſhes an amuſement not wholly unprofitable for that part of life, the greater part of many lives, which would otherwiſe be loſt in idleneſs or vice; it produces an uſeful traffick between the induſtry of indigence and the curioſity of wealth; it brings many things to notice that would be neglected; and by fixing the thoughts upon intellectual pleaſures, reſiſts the natural encroachments of ſenſuality, and maintains the mind in her lawful ſuperiority.

N° 57. *Saturday, May* 19.

PRUDENCE is of more frequent uſe than any other intellectual quality; it is exerted on ſlight occaſions, and called into act by the curſory buſineſs of common life.

WHATEVER is univerſally neceſſary, has been granted to mankind on eaſy terms. Prudence, as it is always wanted, is without great difficulty obtained. It requires neither extenſive view nor profound ſearch, but forces itſelf, by ſpontaneous impulſe, upon a mind neither great nor buſy, neither ingroſſed by vaſt deſigns nor diſtracted by multiplicity of attention.

PRUDENCE operates on life in the ſame manner as rules on compoſition; it produces vigilance rather than elevation, rather prevents loſs than procures advantage; and often

ten eſcapes miſcarriages, but ſeldom reaches either power or honour. It quenches that ardour of enterprize, by which every thing is done that can claim praiſe or admiration; and repreſſes that generous temerity which often fails and often ſucceeds. Rules may obviate faults, but can never confer beauties; and Prudence keeps life ſafe, but does not often make it happy. The world is not amazed with prodigies of excellence, but when Wit tramples upon Rules, and Magnanimity breaks the chains of Prudence.

ONE of the moſt prudent of all that have fallen within my obſervation, is my old companion *Sophron*, who has paſſed through the world in quiet, by perpetual adherence to a few plain maxims, and wonders how contention and diſtreſs can ſo often happen.

THE firſt principle of *Sophron* is to *run no hazards*. Tho' he loves money, he is of opinion, that frugality is a more certain ſource of riches than induſtry. It is to no purpoſe that any proſpect of large profit is ſet before him; he believes little about futurity, and does not love to truſt his money out of his ſight, for

nobody knows what may happen. He has a ſmall eſtate, which he lets at the old rent, becauſe *it is better to have a little than nothing*; but he rigorouſly demands payment on the ſtated day, for *he that cannot pay one quarter cannot pay two.* If he is told of any improvements in Agriculture, he likes the old way, has obſerved that changes very ſeldom anſwer expectation, is of opinion that our forefathers knew how to till the ground as well as we; and concludes with an argument that nothing can overpower, that the expence of planting and fencing is immediate, and the advantage diſtant, and that *he is no wiſe man who will quit a certainty for an uncertainty.*

ANOTHER of *Sophron*'s rules is, *to mind no buſineſs but his own.* In the State he is of no party; but hears and ſpeaks of publick affairs with the ſame coldneſs as of the adminiſtration of ſome ancient republic. If any flagrant act of Fraud or Oppreſſion is mentioned, he hopes that *all is not true that is told:* If Miſconduct or Corruption puts the nation in a flame, he hopes that *every man means well.* At Elections he leaves his dependents to their own choice, and declines to vote himſelf, for every Candi-

date is a good man, whom he is unwilling to oppoſe or offend.

If diſputes happen among his neighbours, he obſerves an invariable and cold neutrality. His punctuality has gained him the reputation of honeſty, and his caution that of wiſdom, and few would refuſe to refer their claims to his award. He might have prevented many expenſive law-ſuits, and quenched many a feud in its firſt ſmoke, but always refuſes the office of Arbitration, becauſe he muſt decide againſt one or the other.

With the affairs of other families he is always unacquainted. He ſees eſtates bought and ſold, ſquandered and increaſed, without praiſing the economiſt, or cenſuring the ſpendthift. He never courts the riſing, leſt they ſhould fall; nor inſults the fallen, leſt they ſhould riſe again. His caution has the appearance of virtue, and all who do not want his help praiſe his benevolence; but if any man ſolicits his aſſiſtance, he has juſt ſent away all his money; and when the petitioner is gone, declares to his family that he is ſorry for his misfortunes, has always looked upon him with particular kindneſs,

neſs, and therefore could not lend him money, leſt he ſhould deſtroy their friendſhip by the neceſſity of enforcing payment.

Of domeſtic misfortunes he has never heard. When he is told the hundredth time of a Gentleman's daughter who has married the coachman, he lifts up his hands with aſtoniſhment, for he always thought her a very ſober girl. When nuptial quarrels, after having filled the country with talk and laughter, at laſt end in ſeparation, he never can conceive how it happened, for he looked upon them as a happy couple.

If his advice is aſked, he never gives any particular direction, becauſe events are uncertain, and he will bring no blame upon himſelf; but he takes the conſulter tenderly by the hand, tells him he makes his caſe his own, and adviſes him not to act raſhly, but to weigh the reaſons on both ſides; obſerves that a man may be as eaſily too haſty as too ſlow, and that as many fail by doing too much as too little; that *a wiſe man has two ears and one tongue*; and *that little ſaid is ſoon amended*; that he could tell him this and that, but

that after all every man is the beſt judge of his own affairs.

WITH this ſome are ſatisfied, and go home with great reverence of *Sophron's* wiſdom, and none are offended, becauſe every one is left in full poſſeſſion of his own opinion.

SOPHRON gives no characters. It is equally vain to tell him of Vice and Virtue, for he has remarked that no man likes to be cenſured, and that very few are delighted with the praiſes of another. He has a few terms which he uſes to all alike. With reſpect to fortune, he believes every family to be in good circumſtances; he never exalts any underſtanding by laviſh praiſe, yet he meets with none but very ſenſible people. Every man is honeſt and hearty, and every woman is a good creature.

THUS *Sophron* creeps along, neither loved nor hated, neither favoured nor oppoſed: he has never attempted to grow rich, for fear of growing poor; and has raiſed no friends, for fear of making enemies.

N° 58. *Saturday, May* 26.

PLEASURE is very ſeldom found where it is ſought. Our brighteſt blazes of gladneſs are commonly kindled by unexpected ſparks. The flowers which ſcatter their odours from time to time in the paths of life, grow up without culture from ſeeds ſcattered by chance.

NOTHING is more hopeleſs than a ſcheme of merriment. Wits and humoriſts are brought together from diſtant quarters by preconcerted invitations; they come attended by their admirers prepared to laugh and to applaud: They gaze a-while on each other, aſhamed to be ſilent, and afraid to ſpeak; every man is diſcontented with himſelf, grows angry with thoſe that give him pain, and reſolves that he will contribute nothing to the merriment of ſuch worthleſs company. Wine inflames the general malignity, and changes ſullenneſs to

petulance, till at laſt none can bear any longer the preſence of the reſt. They retire to vent their indignation in ſafer places, where they are heard with attention; their importance is reſtored, they recover their good humour, and gladden the night with wit and jocularity.

MERRIMENT is always the effect of a ſudden impreſſion. The jeſt which is expected is already deſtroyed. The moſt active imagination will be ſometimes torpid under the frigid influence of melancholy, and ſometimes occaſions will be wanting to tempt the mind, however volatile, to ſallies and excurſions. Nothing was ever ſaid with uncommon felicity, but by the co-operation of chance; and, therefore, wit as well as valour muſt be content to ſhare its honours with fortune.

ALL other pleaſures are equally uncertain; the general remedy of uneaſineſs is change of place; almoſt every one has ſome journey of Pleaſure in his mind, with which he flatters his expectation. He that travels in theory has no inconvenience; he has ſhade and ſunſhine at his diſpoſal, and wherever he alights finds tables of plenty and looks of gaiety.

ty. Theſe ideas are indulged till the day of departure arrives, the chaiſe is called, and the progreſs of happineſs begins.

A FEW miles teach him the fallacies of imagination. The road is duſty, the air is ſultry, the horſes are ſluggiſh, and the poſtilion brutal. He longs for the time of dinner, that he may eat and reſt. The inn is crouded, his orders are neglected, and nothing remains but that he devour in haſte what the cook has ſpoiled, and drive on in queſt of better entertainment. He finds at night a more commodious houſe, but the beſt is always worſe than he expected.

HE at laſt enters his native province, and reſolves to feaſt his mind with the converſation of his old friends, and the recollection of juvenile frolicks. He ſtops at the houſe of his friend, whom he deſigns to overpower with pleaſure by the unexpected interview. He is not known till he tells his name, and revives the memory of himſelf by a gradual explanation. He is then coldly received, and ceremoniouſly feaſted. He haſtes away to another, whom his affairs have called to a diſtant place,

and having ſeen the empty houſe, goes away diſguſted, by a diſappointment which could not be intended becauſe it could not be foreſeen. At the next houſe he finds every face clouded with misfortune, and is regarded with malevolence as an unreaſonable intruder, who comes not to viſit but to inſult them.

It is ſeldom that we find either men or places ſuch as we expect them. He that has pictured a proſpect upon his fancy, will receive little pleaſure from his eyes; he that has anticipated the converſation of a wit, will wonder to what prejudice he owes his reputation. Yet it is neceſſary to hope, though hope ſhould always be deluded; for hope itſelf is happineſs, and its fruſtrations, however frequent, are yet leſs dreadful than its extinction.

N° 59. *Saturday, June* 2.

IN the common enjoyments of life, we cannot very liberally indulge the preſent hour, but by anticipating part of the pleaſure which might have relieved the tedioufneſs of another day; and any uncommon exertion of ſtrength, or perſeverance in labour, is ſucceeded by a long interval of languor and wearineſs. Whatever advantage we ſnatch beyond the certain portion allotted us by nature, is like money ſpent before it is due, which at the time of regular payment will be miſſed and regretted.

FAME, like all other things which are ſuppoſed to give or to encreaſe happineſs, is diſpenſed with the ſame equality of diſtribution. He that is loudly praiſed will be clamorouſly cenſured; he that riſes haſtily into Fame will be in danger of ſinking ſuddenly into oblivion.

Of many writers who filled their age with wonder, and whoſe names we find celebrated in the books of their contemporaries, the works are now no longer to be ſeen, or are ſeen only amidſt the lumber of libraries which are ſeldom viſited, where they lie only to ſhew the deceitfulneſs of hope, and the uncertainty of honour.

Of the decline of reputation many cauſes may be aſſigned. It is commonly loſt becauſe it never was deſerved; and was conferred at firſt, not by the ſuffrage of criticiſm, but by the fondneſs of friendſhip, or ſervility of flattery. The great and popular are very freely applauded, but all ſoon grow weary of echoing to each other a name which has no other claim to notice, but that many mouths are pronouncing it at once.

But many have loſt the final reward of their labours, becauſe they were too haſty to enjoy it. They have laid hold on recent occurrences, and eminent names, and delighted their readers with alluſions and remarks, in which all were intereſted, and to which all

therefore were attentive. But the effect ceaſed with its cauſe; the time quickly came when new events drove the former from memory, when the viciſſitudes of the world brought new hopes and fears, transferred the love and hatred of the public to other agents, and the writer, whoſe works were no longer aſſiſted by gratitude or reſentment, was left to the cold regard of idle curioſity.

He that writes upon general principles, or delivers univerſal truths, may hope to be often read, becauſe his work will be equally uſeful at all times and in every country; but he cannot expect it to be received with eagerneſs, or to ſpread with rapidity, becauſe deſire can have no particular ſtimulation; that which is to be loved long muſt be loved with reaſon rather than with paſſion. He that lays out his labours upon temporary ſubjects, eaſily finds readers, and quickly loſes them; for what ſhould make the book valued when its ſubject is no more?

These obſervations will ſhew the reaſon why the Poem of *Hudibras* is almoſt forgotten, however embelliſhed with ſentiments and diverſified

diverſified with alluſions, however bright with wit, and however ſolid with truth. The hypocriſy which it detected, and the folly which it ridiculed, have long vaniſhed from public notice. Thoſe who had felt the miſchief of diſcord, and the tyranny of uſurpation, read it with rapture, for every line brought back to memory ſomething known, and gratified reſentment, by the juſt cenſure of ſomething hated. But the book which was once quoted by Princes, and which ſupplied converſation to all the aſſemblies of the gay and witty, is now ſeldom mentioned, and even by thoſe that affect to mention it, is ſeldom read. So vainly is wit laviſhed upon fugitive topics, ſo little can architecture ſecure duration when the ground is falſe.

N° 60. *Saturday, June 9.*

CRITICISM is a ſtudy by which men grow important and formidable at very ſmall expence. The power of invention has been conferred by Nature upon few, and the labour of learning thoſe ſciences which may by mere labour be obtained is too great to be willingly endured; but every man can exert ſuch judgment as he has upon the works of others; and he whom Nature has made weak, and Idleneſs keeps ignorant, may yet ſupport his vanity by the name of a Critick.

I HOPE it will give comfort to great numbers who are paſſing thro' the world in obſcurity, when I inform them how eaſily diſtinction may be obtained. All the other powers of literature are coy and haughty, they muſt be long courted, and at laſt are not always gained; but Criticiſm is a goddeſs eaſy of acceſs and forward of advance, who will meet the ſlow, and encourage the timorous; the want of

of meaning ſhe ſupplies with words, and the want of ſpirit ſhe recompenſes with malignity.

THIS profeſſion has one recommendation peculiar to itſelf, that it gives vent to malignity without real miſchief. No genius was ever blaſted by the breath of Criticks. The poiſon which, if confined, would have burſt the heart, fumes away in empty hiſſes, and malice is ſet at eaſe with very little danger to merit. The Critick is the only man whoſe triumph is without another's pain, and whoſe greatneſs does not riſe upon another's ruin.

To a ſtudy at once ſo eaſy and ſo reputable, ſo malicious and ſo harmleſs, it cannot be neceſſary to invite my readers by a long or laboured exhortation; it is ſufficient, ſince all would be Criticks if they could, to ſhew by one eminent example that all can be Criticks if they will.

Dick Minim, after the common courſe of puerile ſtudies, in which he was no great proficient, was put apprentice to a Brewer, with whom he had lived two years, when his uncle died in the city, and left him a large fortune in the

the ſtocks. *Dick* had for ſix months before uſed the company of the lower players, of whom he had learned to ſcorn a trade, and being now at liberty to follow his genius, he reſolved to be a man of wit and humour. That he might be properly initiated in his new character, he frequented the coffee-houſes near the theatres, where he liſtened very diligently, day after day, to thoſe who talked of language and ſentiments, and unities and cataſtrophes, till by ſlow degrees he began to think that he underſtood ſomething of the Stage, and hoped in time to talk himſelf.

But he did not truſt ſo much to natural ſagacity, as wholly to neglect the help of books. When the Theatres were ſhut, he retired to *Richmond* with a few ſelect writers, whoſe opinions he impreſſed upon his memory by unwearied diligence; and, when he returned with other wits to the town, was able to tell, in very proper phraſes, that the chief buſineſs of art is to copy nature; that a perfect writer is not to be expected, becauſe genius decays as judgment increaſes; that the great art is the art of blotting; and that, according to the rule of *Horace*, every piece ſhould be kept nine years.

Of

Of the great Authors he now began to diſplay the Characters, laying down as an univerſal poſition. that all had beauties and defects. His opinion was, that *Shakeſpear*, committing himſelf wholly to the impulſe of Nature, wanted that correctneſs which learning would have given him; and that *Jonſon*, truſting to learning, did not ſufficiently caſt his eye on Nature. He blamed the *Stanza* of *Spenſer*, and could not bear the *Hexameters* of *Sidney*. *Denham* and *Waller* he held the firſt reformers of *Engliſh* Numbers; and thought that if *Waller* could have obtained the ſtrength of *Denham*, or *Denham* the ſweetneſs of *Waller*, there had been nothing wanting to complete a Poet. He often expreſſed his commiſeration of *Dryden's* poverty, and his indignation at the age which ſuffered him to write for bread; he repeated with rapture the firſt lines of *All for Love*, but wondered at the corruption of taſte which could bear any thing ſo unnatural as rhyming tragedies. In *Otway* he found uncommon powers of moving the paſſions, but was diſguſted by his general negligence, and blamed him for making a Conſpirator his Hero; and never concluded his diſquiſition, without remarking how happily the ſound of the clock is made to alarm the audience.

dience. *Southern* would have been his favourite, but that he mixes comick with tragick ſcenes, intercepts the natural courſe of the paſſions, and fills the mind with a wild confuſion of mirth and melancholy. The verſification of *Rowe* he thought too melodious for the ſtage, and too little varied in different paſſions. He made it the great fault of *Congreve*, that all his perſons were wits, and that he always wrote with more art than nature. He conſidered *Cato* rather as a poem than a play, and allowed *Addiſon* to be the complete maſter of Allegory and grave humour, but paid no great deference to him as a Critick. He thought the chief merit of *Prior* was in his eaſy tales and lighter poems, tho' he allowed that his *Solomon* had many noble ſentiments elegantly expreſſed. In *Swift* he diſcovered an inimitable vein of irony, and an eaſineſs which all would hope and few would attain. *Pope* he was inclined to degrade from a Poet to a Verſifier, and thought his numbers rather luſcious than ſweet. He often lamented the neglect of *Phædra* and *Hippolitus*, and wiſhed to ſee the ſtage under better regulations.

THESE aſſertions paſſed commonly uncontradicted; and if now and then an opponent ſtarted

ſtarted up, he was quickly repreſſed by the ſuffrages of the company, and *Minim* went away from every diſpute with elation of heart and increaſe of confidence.

He now grew conſcious of his abilities, and began to talk of the preſent ſtate of Dramatick Poetry; wondered what was become of the comick genius which ſupplied our anceſtors with wit and pleaſantry, and why no writer could be found that durſt now venture beyond a Farce. He ſaw no reaſon for thinking that the vein of humour was exhauſted, ſince we live in a country where liberty ſuffers every character to ſpread itſelf to its utmoſt bulk, and which therefore produces more originals than all the reſt of the world together. Of Tragedy he concluded buſineſs to be the ſoul, and yet often hinted that love predominates too much upon the modern ſtage.

He was now an acknowledged Critick, and had his own ſeat in a coffee-houſe, and headed a party in the pit. *Minim* has more vanity than ill-nature, and ſeldom deſires to do much miſchief; he will perhaps murmur a little in the ear of him that ſits next him, but endeavours

vours to influence the audience to favour, by clapping when an actor exclaims *ye Gods*, or laments the miſery of his country.

By degrees he was admitted to Rehearſals, and many of his friends are of opinion, that our preſent Poets are indebted to him for their happieſt thoughts; by his contrivance the bell was rung twice in *Barbaroſſa*, and by his perſuaſion the author of *Cleone* concluded his Play without a couplet; for what can be more abſurd, ſaid *Minim*, than that part of a play ſhould be rhymed, and part written in blank verſe? and by what acquiſition of faculties is the Speaker, who never could find rhymes before, enabled to rhyme at the concluſion of an act?

He is the great inveſtigator of hidden beauties, and is particularly delighted when he finds *the Sound an Echo to the Senſe*. He has read all our Poets with particular attention to this delicacy of Verſification, and wonders at the ſupineneſs with which their Works have been hitherto peruſed, ſo that no man has found the ſound of a Drum in this diſtich,

"When

" When Pulpit, Drum eccleſiaſtic,
" Was beat with firſt inſtead of a ſtick;"

and that the wonderful lines upon Honour and a Bubble have hitherto paſſed without notice.

" Honour is like the glaſſy Bubble,
" Which coſts Philoſophers ſuch trouble;
" Where one part crack'd, the whole does fly,
" And Wits are crack'd to find out why."

In theſe Verſes, ſays *Minim*, we have two ſtriking accommodations of the Sound to the Senſe. It is impoſſible to utter the two lines emphatically without an act like that which they deſcribe; *Bubble* and *Trouble* cauſing a momentary inflation of the Cheeks by the retention of the breath, which is afterwards forcibly emitted, as in the practice of *blowing bubbles*. But the greateſt excellence is in the third line, which is *crack'd* in the middle to expreſs a crack, and then ſhivers into monoſyllables. Yet has this diamond lain neglected with common ſtones, and among the innumerable admirers of *Hudibras* the obſervation of this ſuperlative paſſage has been reſerved for the ſagacity of *Minim*.

N° 61.

N° 61. *Saturday, June* 16.

MR. *Minim* had now advanced himſelf to the zenith of critical reputation; when he was in the Pit, every eye in the Boxes was fixed upon him; when he entered his Coffee-houſe, he was ſurrounded by circles of candidates, who paſſed their noviciate of literature under his tuition; his opinion was aſked by all who had no opinion of their own, and yet loved to debate and decide; and no compoſition was ſuppoſed to paſs in ſafety to poſterity, till it had been ſecured by *Minim's* approbation.—

MINIM profeſſes great admiration of the wiſdom and munificence by which the Academies of the continent were raiſed, and often wiſhes for ſome ſtandard of taſte, for ſome tribunal, to which merit may appeal from caprice, prejudice, and malignity. He has formed a plan for an Academy of Criticiſm, where every work of Imagination may be read before it is printed, and

and which ſhall authoritatively direct the Theatres what pieces to receive or reject, to exclude or to revive.

SUCH an inſtitution would, in *Dick's* opinion, ſpread the fame of *Engliſh* Literature over *Europe*, and make *London* the metropolis of elegance and politeneſs, the place to which the learned and ingenious of all countries would repair for inſtruction and improvement, and where nothing would any longer be applauded or endured that was not conformed to the niceſt rules, and finiſhed with the higheſt elegance.

TILL ſome happy conjunction of the planets ſhall diſpoſe our Princes or Miniſters to make themſelves immortal by ſuch an Academy, *Minim* contents himſelf to preſide four nights in a week in a Critical Society ſelected by himſelf, where he is heard without contradiction, and whence his judgment is diſſeminated through the great vulgar and the ſmall.

WHEN he is placed in the chair of Criticiſm, he declares loudly for the noble ſimplicity of our anceſtors, in oppoſition to the petty refine-

ments,

ments, and ornamental luxuriance. Sometimes he is ſunk in deſpair, and perceives falſe delicacy daily gaining ground, and ſometimes brightens his countenance with a gleam of hope, and predicts the revival of the true ſublime. He then fulminates his loudeſt cenſures againſt the monkiſh barbarity of rhyme; wonders how beings that pretend to reaſon can be pleaſed with one line always ending like another; tells how unjuſtly and unnaturally ſenſe is ſacrificed to ſound; how often the beſt thoughts are mangled by the neceſſity of confining or extending them to the dimenſions of a couplet; and rejoices that genius has, in our days, ſhaken off the ſhackles which had encumbered it ſo long. Yet he allows that rhyme may ſometimes be borne, if the lines be often broken, and the pauſes judiciouſly diverſified.

From Blank Verſe he makes an eaſy tranſition to *Milton*, whom he produces as an example of the ſlow advance of laſting reputation. *Milton* is the only writer in whoſe books *Minim* can read for ever without wearineſs. What cauſe it is that exempts this pleaſure from ſatiety he has long and diligently enquired, and

believes it to conſiſt in the perpetual variation of the numbers, by which the ear is gratified and the attention awakened. The lines that are commonly thought rugged and unmuſical, he conceives to have been written to temper the melodious luxury of the reſt, or to expreſs things by a proper cadence: for he ſcarcely finds a verſe that has not this favourite beauty; he declares that he could ſhiver in a hot-houſe when he reads that

" the ground
" Burns frore, and cold performs th' effect of fire;

and that when *Milton* bewails his blindneſs; the verſe

" So thick a drop ſerene has quench'd theſe orbs,"

has, he knows not how, ſomething that ſtrikes him with an obſcure ſenſation like that which he fancies would be felt from the ſound of Darkneſs.

MINIM is not ſo confident of his rules of Judgement as not very eagerly to catch new light from the name of the author. He is commonly ſo prudent as to ſpare thoſe whom he

he cannot reſiſt, unleſs, as will ſometimes happen, he finds the publick combined againſt them. But a freſh pretender to fame he is ſtrongly inclined to cenſure, till his own honour requires that he commend him. Till he knows the ſucceſs of a compoſition, he intrenches himſelf in general terms; there are ſome new thoughts and beautiful paſſages, but there is likewiſe much which he would have adviſed the author to expunge. He has ſeveral favourite epithets, of which he has never ſettled the meaning, but which are very commodiouſly applied to books which he has not read, or cannot underſtand. One is *manly*, another is *dry*, another *ſtiff*, and another *ſlimzy*; ſometimes he diſcovers delicacy of ſtyle, and ſometimes meets with *ſtrange expreſſions*.

He is never ſo great, or ſo happy, as when a youth of promiſing parts is brought to receive his directions for the proſecution of his ſtudies. He then puts on a very ſerious air; he adviſes the pupil to read none but the beſt Authors, and, when he finds one congenial to his own mind, to ſtudy his beauties, but avoid his faults, and, when he ſits down to write, to conſider how his favourite Author would

think at the preſent time on the preſent occaſion. He exhorts him to catch thoſe moments when he finds his thoughts expanded and his genius exalted, but to take care leſt imagination hurry him beyond the bounds of Nature. He holds Diligence the mother of Succeſs; yet enjoins him, with great earneſtneſs, not to read more than he can digeſt, and not to confuſe his mind by purſuing ſtudies of contrary tendencies. He tells him, that every man has his genius, and that *Cicero* could never be a Poet. The boy retires illuminated, reſolves to follow his genius, and to think how *Milton* would have thought: and *Minim* feaſts upon his own beneficence till another day brings another Pupil.

N° 62. *Saturday, June 23.*

To the IDLER,

SIR,

AN opinion prevails almoſt univerſally in the world, that he who has money has every thing. This is not a modern paradox, or the tenet of a ſmall and obſcure ſect, but a perſuaſion which appears to have operated upon moſt minds in all ages, and which is ſupported by authorities ſo numerous and ſo cogent, that nothing but long experience could have given me confidence to queſtion its truth.

BUT Experience is the teſt by which all the Philoſophers of the preſent age agree, that Speculation muſt be tried; and I may be therefore allowed to doubt the power of money, ſince I have been a long time rich,

and have not yet found that riches can make me happy.

My father was a farmer, neither wealthy nor indigent, who gave me a better education than was ſuitable to my birth, becauſe my uncle in the city deſigned me for his heir, and deſired that I might be bred a Gentleman. My uncle's wealth was the perpetual ſubject of converſation in the houſe; and when any little misfortune befell us, or any mortification dejected us, my father always exhorted me to hold up my head, for my uncle would never marry.

My uncle, indeed, kept his promiſe. Having his mind completely buſied between his warehouſe and the 'Change, he felt no tediouſneſs of life, nor any want of domeſtick amuſements. When my father died, he received me kindly; but, after a few months, finding no great pleaſure in the converſation of each other, we parted, and he remitted me a ſmall annuity, on which I lived a quiet and ſtudious life, without any wiſh to grow great by the death of my benefactor.

But though I never ſuffered any malignant impatience to take hold on my mind, I could not forbear ſometimes to imagine to myſelf the pleaſure of being rich; and when I read of diverſions and magnificence, reſolved to try, when time ſhould put the trial in my power, what pleaſure they could afford.

My uncle, in the latter ſpring of his life, when his ruddy cheek and his firm nerves promiſed him a long and healthy age, died of an apoplexy. His death gave me neither joy nor ſorrow. He did me good, and I regarded him with gratitude; but I could not pleaſe him, and therefore could not love him.

He had the policy of little minds, who love to ſurprize; and having always repreſented his fortune as leſs than it was, had, I ſuppoſe, often gratified himſelf with thinking, how I ſhould be delighted to find myſelf twice as rich as I expected. My wealth was ſuch as exceeded all the ſchemes of expence which I had formed, and I ſoon began to expand my thoughts, and look round for ſome purchaſe of felicity.

THE moſt ſtriking effect of riches is the ſplendour of dreſs, which every man has obſerved to enforce reſpect, and facilitate reception; and my firſt deſire was to be fine. I ſent for a taylor who was employed by the Nobility, and ordered ſuch a ſuit of cloaths as I had often looked on with involuntary ſubmiſſion, and am aſhamed to remember with what flutters of expectation I waited for the hour when I ſhould iſſue forth in all the ſplendour of embroidery. The cloaths were brought, and for three days I obſerved many eyes turned towards me as I paſſed: but I felt myſelf obſtructed in the common intercourſe of civility, by an uneaſy conſciouſneſs of my new appearance; as I thought myſelf more obſerved, I was more anxious about my mien and behaviour; and the mien which is formed by care is commonly ridiculous. A ſhort time accuſtomed me to myſelf, and my dreſs was without pain, and without pleaſure.

FOR a little while I tried to be a Rake, but I began too late; and having by nature no turn for a Frolick, was in great danger of ending

ending in a Drunkard. A fever, in which not one of my companions paid me a viſit, gave me time for reflection. I found that there was no great pleaſure in breaking windows and lying in the Round-houſe; and reſolved to aſſociate no longer with thoſe whom, though I had treated and bailed them, I could not make friends.

I THEN changed my meaſures, kept running horſes, and had the comfort of ſeeing my name very often in the news. I had a cheſnut horſe, the grandſon of *Childers*, who won four plates, and ten by-matches; and a bay Filly, who carried off the five years old plate, and was expected to perform much greater exploits, when my groom broke her wind, becauſe I happened to catch him ſelling oats for beer. This happineſs was ſoon at an end; there was no pleaſure when I loſt, and when I won I could not much exalt myſelf by the virtues of my horſe. I grew aſhamed of the company of Jockey Lords, and reſolved to ſpend no more of my time in the Stable.

It was now known that I had money and would ſpend it, and I paſſed four months in the company of Architects, whoſe whole buſineſs was to perſuade me to build a houſe. I told them that I had more room than I wanted, but could not get rid of their importunities. A new plan was brought me every morning; till at laſt my conſtancy was overpowered, and I began to build. The happineſs of Building laſted but a little while, for though I love to ſpend, I hate to be cheated; and I ſoon found, that to build is to be robbed.

How I proceed in the purſuit of happineſs, you ſhall hear when I find myſelf diſpoſed to write.

I am, Sir, &c.

TIM. RANGER.

N° 63. *Saturday, June 30.*

THE natural progreſs of the works of men is from rudeneſs to convenience, from convenience to elegance, and from elegance to nicety.

THE firſt labour is enforced by neceſſity. The ſavage finds himſelf incommoded by heat and cold, by rain and wind; he ſhelters himſelf in the hollow of a rock, and learns to dig a cave where there was none before. He finds the ſun and the wind excluded by the thicket, and when the accidents of the chace, or the convenience of paſturage leads him into more open places, he forms a thicket for himſelf, by planting ſtakes at proper diſtances, and laying branches from one to another.

THE next gradation of ſkill and induſtry produces a houſe, cloſed with doors, and di-

vided by partitions; and apartments are multiplied and diſpoſed according to the various degrees of power or invention; improvement ſucceeds improvement, as he that is freed from a greater evil grows impatient of a leſs, till eaſe in time is advanced to pleaſure.

THE mind ſet free from the importunities of natural want, gains leiſure to go in ſearch of ſuperfluous gratifications, and adds to the uſes of habitation the delights of proſpect. Then begins the reign of ſymmetry; orders of architecture are invented, and one part of the edifice is conformed to another, without any other reaſon than that the eye may not be offended.

THE paſſage is very ſhort from elegance to luxury. *Ionick* and *Corinthian* columns are ſoon ſucceeded by gilt cornices, inlaid floors, and petty ornaments, which ſhew rather the wealth than the taſte of the poſſeſſor.

LANGUAGE proceeds, like every thing elſe, through improvement to degeneracy. The rovers who firſt take poſſeſſion of a country, having not many ideas, and thoſe not nicely modi-

modified or diſcriminated, were contented if by general terms and abrupt ſentences they could make their thoughts known to one another; as life begins to be more regulated, and property to become limited, diſputes muſt be decided, and claims adjuſted; the differences of things are noted, and diſtinctneſs and propriety of expreſſion become neceſſary. In time, happineſs and plenty give riſe to curioſity, and the ſciences are cultivated for eaſe and pleaſure; to the arts which are now to be taught, emulation ſoon adds the art of teaching; and the ſtudious and ambitious contend not only who ſhall think beſt, but who ſhall tell their thoughts in the moſt pleaſing manner.

THEN begin the arts of Rhetorick and Poetry, the regulation of figures, the ſelection of words, the modulation of periods, the graces of tranſition, the complication of clauſes, and all the delicacies of ſtyle and ſubtilties of compoſition, uſeful while they advance perſpicuity, and laudable while they increaſe pleaſure; but eaſy to be refined by needleſs ſcrupuloſity till they ſhall more embarraſs the writer than aſſiſt the reader or delight him.

THE

THE firſt ſtate is commonly antecedent to the practice of writing; the ignorant eſſays of imperfect diction paſs away with the ſavage generation that uttered them. No nation can trace their language beyond the ſecond period, and even of that it does not often happen that many monuments remain.

THE fate of the *Engliſh* tongue is like that of others. We know nothing of the ſcanty jargon of our barbarous anceſtors, but we have ſpecimens of our language when it began to be adapted to civil and religious purpoſes, and find it ſuch as might naturally be expected, artleſs and ſimple, unconnected and conciſe. The writers ſeem to have deſired little more than to be underſtood, and perhaps ſeldom aſpired to the praiſe of pleaſing. Their verſes were conſidered chiefly as memorial, and therefore did not differ from proſe but by the meaſure or the rhyme.

IN this ſtate, varied a little according to the different purpoſes or abilities of writers, our language may be ſaid to have continued to the time of *Gower*, whom *Chaucer* calls his maſter, and who, however obſcured by his ſcholar's

ſar's popularity, ſeems juſtly to claim the honour which has been hitherto denied him, of ſhewing his countrymen that ſomething more was to be deſired, and that *Engliſh* verſe might be exalted into poetry.

FROM the time of *Gower* and *Chaucer*, the *Engliſh* writers have ſtudied elegance, and advanced their language, by ſucceſſive improvements, to as much harmony as it can eaſily receive, and as much copiouſneſs as human knowledge has hitherto required. Theſe advances have not been made at all times with the ſame diligence or the ſame ſucceſs. Negligence has ſuſpended the courſe of improvement, or affectation turned it aſide; time has elapſed with little change, or change has been made without amendment. But elegance has been long kept in view with attention as near to conſtancy as life permits, till every man now endeavours to excel others in accuracy, or outſhine them in ſplendour of ſtyle, and the danger is, leſt care ſhould too ſoon paſs to affectation.

N° 64. *Saturday, July 7.*

To the IDLER.

SIR,

AS nature has made every man desirous of happiness, I flatter myself, that you and your readers cannot but feel some curiosity to know the sequel of my story; for though by trying the different schemes of pleasure, I have yet found nothing in which I could finally acquiesce; yet the narrative of my attempts will not be wholly without use, since we always approach nearer to truth as we detect more and more varieties of error.

WHEN I had sold my Racers, and put the orders of Architecture out of my head, my next resolution was to be a *fine Gentleman*. I frequented the polite Coffee-houses, grew acquainted with all the men of humour, and gained the right of bowing familiarly to half the nobility. In this new scene of life my great

great labour was to learn to laugh. I had been uſed to conſider laughter as the effect of merriment, but I ſoon learned that it is one of the arts of adulation, and, from laughing only to ſhew that I was pleaſed, I now began to laugh when I wiſhed to pleaſe. This was at firſt very difficult. I ſometimes heard the ſtory with dull indifference, and, not exalting myſelf to merriment by due gradations, burſt out ſuddenly into an aukward noiſe, which was not always favourably interpreted. Sometimes I was behind the reſt of the company, and loſt the grace of laughing by delay, and ſometimes when I began at the right time was deficient in loudneſs or in length. But by diligent imitation of the beſt models, I attained at laſt ſuch flexibility of muſcles, that I was always a welcome auditor of a ſtory, and got the reputation of a good-natured fellow.

This was ſomething; but much more was to be done, that I might be univerſally allowed to be a fine Gentleman. I appeared at Court on all publick days; betted at gaming tables, and played at all the routs of eminence. I went every night to the Opera, took a Fidler of diſputed merit under my protection, became

came the head of a muſical faction, and had ſometimes Concerts at my own houſe. I once thought to have attained the higheſt rank of elegance, by taking a foreign ſinger into keeping. But my favourite Fidler contrived to be arreſted on the night of a concert, for a finer ſuit of cloaths than I had ever preſumed to wear, and I loſt all the fame of Patronage by refuſing to bail him.

My next ambition was to ſet for my Picture. I ſpent a whole winter in going from Painter to Painter, to beſpeak a whole length of one, and a half length of another; I talked of nothing but attitudes, draperies, and proper lights; took my friends to ſee the pictures after every ſitting; heard every day of a wonderful performer in crayons and miniature, and ſent my pictures to be copied; was told by the judges that they were not like, and was recommended to other artiſts. At length, being not able to pleaſe my friends, I grew leſs pleaſed myſelf, and at laſt reſolved to think no more about it.

It was impoſſible to live in total idleneſs: and wandering about in ſearch of ſomething to do,

do, I was invited to a weekly meeting of Virtuoſos, and felt myſelf inſtantaneouſly ſeized with an unextinguiſhable ardour for all Natural Curioſities. I ran from auction to auction, became a Critic in Shells and Foſſils, bought a *Hortus ſiccus* of ineſtimable value, and purchaſed a ſecret art of preſerving Inſects, which made my collection the envy of the other Philoſophers. I found this pleaſure mingled with much vexation. All the faults of my life were for nine months circulated through the town with the moſt active malignity, becauſe I happened to catch a Moth of peculiar variegation; and becauſe I once out-bid all the Lovers of Shells and carried off a Nautilus, it was hinted that the validity of my Uncle's Will ought to be diſputed. I will not deny that I was very proud both of the Moth and of the Shell, and gratified myſelf with the envy of my companions, perhaps more than became a benevolent Being. But in time I grew weary of being hated for that which produced no advantage, gave my Shells to children that wanted play-things, and ſuppreſſed the art of drying Butterflies, becauſe I would not tempt Idleneſs and Cruelty to kill them.

I NOW began to feel life tedious, and wiſhed to ſtore myſelf with friends, with whom I might grow old in the interchange of benevolence. I had obſerved that popularity was moſt eaſily gained by an open table, and therefore hired a French Cook, furniſhed my ſideboard with great magnificence, filled my cellar with wines of pompous appellations, bought every thing that was dear before it was good, and invited all thoſe who were moſt famous for judging of a dinner. In three weeks my Cook gave me warning, and, upon enquiry, told me that Lord *Queaſy*, who dined with me the day before, had ſent him an offer of double wages. My pride prevailed, I raiſed his wages, and invited his Lordſhip to another feaſt. I love plain meat, and was therefore ſoon weary of ſpreading a table of which I could not partake. I found that my gueſts, when they went away, criticiſed their entertainment, and cenſured my profuſion; my Cook thought himſelf neceſſary, and took upon him the direction of the houſe; and I could not rid myſelf of flatterers, or break from ſlavery, but by ſhutting up my houſe, and declaring my reſolution to live in lodgings.

AFTER

AFTER all this, tell me, dear *Idler*, what I muſt do next; I have health, I have money, and hope that I have underſtanding; yet, with all theſe, I have never yet been able to paſs a ſingle day which I did not wiſh at an end before ſun-ſet. Tell me, dear *Idler*, what I ſhall do. I am

Your humble Servant,

TIM. RANGER.

N° 65. *Saturday, July* 14.

THE Sequel of *Clarendon's* Hiſtory, at laſt happily publiſhed, is an acceſſion to *Engliſh* Literature equally agreeable to the admirers of elegance and the lovers of truth; many doubtful facts may now be aſcertained, and many queſtions, after long debate, may be determined by deciſive authority. He that records tranſactions in which himſelf was engaged, has not only an opportunity of knowing innumerable particulars which eſcape ſpectators, but has his natural powers ex-

alted by that ardour which always riſes at the remembrance of our own importance, and by which every man is enabled to relate his own actions better than another's.

THE difficulties through which this work has ſtruggled into light, and the delays with which our hopes have been long mocked, naturally lead the mind to the conſideration of the common fate of poſthumous compoſitions.

HE who ſees himſelf ſurrounded by admirers, and whoſe vanity is hourly feaſted with all the luxuries of ſtudied praiſe, is eaſily perſuaded that his influence will be extended beyond his life; that they who cringe in his preſence will reverence his memory; and that thoſe who are proud to be numbered among his friends, will endeavour to vindicate his choice by zeal for his reputation.

WITH hopes like theſe, to the Executors of *Swift* was committed the Hiſtory of the laſt years of Queen *Anne*, and to thoſe of *Pope* the Works which remained unprinted in his cloſet. The performances of *Pope* were burnt by thoſe whom he had perhaps ſelected from

all mankind as moſt likely to publiſh them; and the Hiſtory had likewiſe periſhed, had not a ſtraggling tranſcript fallen into buſy hands.

THE Papers left in the cloſet of *Peireſc* ſupplied his heirs with a whole winter's fuel; and many of the labours of the learned Biſhop *Lloyd* were conſumed in the kitchen of his deſcendants.

SOME Works, indeed, have eſcaped total deſtruction, but yet have had reaſon to lament the fate of Orphans expoſed to the frauds of unfaithful Guardians. How *Hale* would have borne the mutilations which his *Pleas of the Crown* have ſuffered from the Editor, they who know his character will eaſily conceive.

THE original Copy of *Burnet's* Hiſtory, though promiſed to ſome public * Library, has been never given; and who then can prove the fidelity of the publication, when the authenticity of *Clarendon's* Hiſtory, though printed with the ſanction of one of the firſt Univerſities of the World, had not an unexpected

* It would be proper to repoſite, in ſome public Place, the Manuſcript of *Clarendon*, which has not eſcaped all ſuſpicion of unfaithful publication.

manu-

manuſcript been happily diſcovered, would, with the help of factious credulity, have been brought into queſtion by the two loweſt of all human beings, a Scribbler for a Party, and a Commiſſioner of Exciſe?

VANITY is often no leſs miſchievous than negligence or diſhoneſty. He that poſſeſſes a valuable Manuſcript, hopes to raiſe its eſteem by concealment, and delights in the diſtinction which he imagines himſelf to obtain by keeping the key of a treaſure which he neither uſes nor imparts. From him it falls to ſome other owner, leſs vain but more negligent, who conſiders it as uſeleſs lumber, and rids himſelf of the incumbrance.

YET there are ſome works which the Authors muſt conſign unpubliſhed to poſterity, however uncertain be the event, however hopeleſs be the truſt. He that writes the hiſtory of his own times, if he adheres ſteadily to truth, will write that which his own times will not eaſily endure. He muſt be content to repoſite his book till all private paſſions ſhall ceaſe, and love and hatred give way to curioſity.

BUT

But many leave the labours of half their life to their executors and to chance, becauſe they will not ſend them abroad unfiniſhed, and are unable to finiſh them, having preſcribed to themſelves ſuch a degree of exactneſs as human diligence can ſcarcely attain. *Lloyd*, ſays *Burnet*, *did not lay out his learning with the ſame diligence as he laid it in.* He was always heſitating and enquiring, raiſing objections and removing them, and waiting for clearer light and fuller diſcovery. *Baker*, after many years paſt in Biography, left his manuſcripts to be buried in a library, becauſe that was imperfect which could never be perfected.

Of theſe learned men, let thoſe who aſpire to the ſame praiſe, imitate the diligence, and avoid the ſcrupuloſity. Let it be always remembered that life is ſhort, that knowledge is endleſs, and that many doubts deſerve not to be cleared. Let thoſe whom nature and ſtudy have qualified to teach mankind, tell us what they have learned while they are yet able to tell it, and truſt their reputation only to themſelves.

N° 66. *Saturday, July* 21.

NO complaint is more frequently repeated among the learned, than that of the waſte made by time among the labours of Antiquity. Of thoſe who once filled the civilized world with their renown, nothing is now left but their names, which are left only to raiſe deſires that never can be ſatisfied, and ſorrow which never can be comforted.

HAD all the writings of the ancients been faithfully delivered down from age to age, had the *Alexandrian* library been ſpared, and the *Palatine* repoſitories remained unimpaired, how much might we have known of which we are now doomed to be ignorant! how many laborious enquiries, and dark conjectures, how many collations of broken hints and mutilated paſſages, might have been ſpared! We ſhould have known the Succeſſions of Princes, the Revolutions of Empire, the Actions of the Great, and

Opinions of the Wiſe, the Laws and Conſtitutions of every State, and the Arts by which public Grandeur and Happineſs are acquired and preſerved; we ſhould have traced the progreſs of Life, ſeen Colonies from diſtant regions take poſſeſſion of *European* deſerts, and troops of Savages ſettled into Communities by the deſire of keeping what they had acquired; we ſhould have traced the gradations of civility, and travelled upward to the original of things by the light of Hiſtory, till in remoter times it had glimmered in fable, and at laſt ſunk into darkneſs.

If the works of imagination had been leſs diminiſhed, it is likely that all future times might have been ſupplied with inexhauſtible amuſement by the fictions of Antiquity. The Tragedies of *Sophocles* and *Euripides* would have ſhewn all the ſtronger paſſions in all their diverſities; and the Comedies of *Menander* would have furniſhed all the maxims of domeſtic life. Nothing would have been neceſſary to moral wiſdom but to have ſtudied theſe great Maſters, whoſe knowledge would have guided doubt, and whoſe authority would have ſilenced cavils.

SUCH are the thoughts that riſe in every Student, when his curioſity is eluded, and his ſearches are fruſtrated; yet it may perhaps be doubted, whether our complaints are not ſometimes inconſiderate, and whether we do not imagine more evil than we feel. Of the Ancients, enough remains to excite our emulation, and direct our endeavours. Many of the works which time has left us, we know to have been thoſe that were moſt eſteemed, and which Antiquity itſelf conſidered as Models; ſo that, having the Originals, we may without much regret loſe the imitations. The obſcurity which the want of contemporary writers often produces, only darkens ſingle paſſages, and thoſe commonly of ſlight importance. The general tendency of every piece may be known, and though that diligence deſerves praiſe which leaves nothing unexamined, yet its miſcarriages are not much to be lamented; for the moſt uſeful truths are always univerſal, and unconnected with accidents and cuſtoms.

SUCH is the general conſpiracy of human nature againſt contemporary merit, that if we had inherited from Antiquity enough to afford employment for the laborious, and amuſement for

for the idle, I know not what room would have been left for modern genius or modern induſtry; almoſt every ſubject would have been preoccupied, and every ſtyle would have been fixed by a precedent from which few would have ventured to depart. Every writer would have had a rival, whoſe ſuperiority was already acknowledged, and to whoſe fame his work would, even before it was ſeen, be marked out for a ſacrifice.

We ſee how little the united experience of mankind have been able to add to the heroic characters diſplayed by *Homer*, and how few incidents the fertile imagination of modern *Italy* has yet produced, which may not be found in the *Iliad* and *Odyſſey*. It is likely, that if all the works of the *Athenian* Philoſophers had been extant, *Malbranche* and *Locke* would have been condemned to be ſilent readers of the ancient Metaphyſicians; and it is apparent, that if the old writers had all remained, the *Idler* could not have written a diſquiſition on the loſs.

N° 67. *Saturday, July* 28.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

IN the obſervations which you have made on the various opinions and purſuits of mankind, you muſt often, in literary converſations, have met with men who conſider Diſſipation as the great enemy of the intellect; and maintain, that in proportion as the ſtudent keeps himſelf within the bounds of a ſettled plan, he will more certainly advance in ſcience.

THIS opinion is, perhaps, generally true; yet, when we contemplate the inquiſitive nature of the human mind, and its perpetual impatience of all reſtraint, it may be doubted whether the faculties may not be contracted by confining the attention; and whether it may not ſometimes be proper to riſque the certainty of little for the chance of much.

Acqui-

Acquiſitions of knowledge, like blazes of genius, are often fortuitous. Thoſe who had propoſed to themſelves a methodical courſe of reading, light by accident on a new book, which ſeizes their thoughts and kindles their curioſity, and opens an unexpected proſpect, to which the way which they had preſcribed to themſelves would never have conducted them.

To inforce and illuſtrate my meaning, I have ſent you a Journal of three days employment, found among the papers of a late intimate acquaintance; who, as will plainly appear, was a man of vaſt deſigns, and of vaſt performances, though he ſometimes deſigned one thing and performed another. I allow that the *Spectator*'s inimitable productions of this kind may well diſcourage all ſubſequent Journaliſts; but, as the ſubject of this is different from that of any which the *Spectator* has given us, I leave it to you to publiſh or ſuppreſs it.

" *Mem.* THE following three days I propoſe to give up to reading; and intend, after all the delays which have obtruded themſelves upon me, to finiſh my *Eſſay on the Extent of*

the Mental Powers; to reviſe my *Treatiſe on Logick*; to begin the *Epick* which I have long projected; to proceed in my peruſal of the *Scriptures* with *Grotius's Comment*; and at my leiſure to regale myſelf with the works of Claſſicks, ancient and modern, and to finiſh my *Ode to Aſtronomy*.

" *Monday.*] DESIGNED to riſe at ſix, but, by my ſervant's lazineſs, my fire was not lighted before eight, when I dropped into a ſlumber that laſted till nine; at which time I roſe, and, after breakfaſt, at ten ſat down to ſtudy, propoſing to begin upon my *Eſſay*; but finding occaſion to conſult a paſſage in *Plato*, was abſorbed in the peruſal of the *Republick* till twelve. I had neglected to forbid company, and now enters *Tom Careleſs*, who, after half an hour's chat, inſiſted upon my going with him to enjoy an abſurd character, that he had appointed, by an advertiſement, to meet him at a particular coffee-houſe. After we had for ſome time entertained ourſelves with him, we ſallied out, deſigning each to repair to his home; but, as it fell out, coming up in the ſtreet to a man, whoſe ſteel by his ſide declared him a butcher, we overheard him opening

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an Addreſs to a genteeliſh ſort of young Lady, whom he walked with: "Miſs, Though your "father is maſter of a coal-lighter, and you "will be a great fortune, 'tis true; yet I wiſh "I may be cut into quarters if it is not only "Love, and not Lucre of Gain, that is my "motive for offering terms of marriage." As this Lover proceeded in his ſpeech, he miſled us the length of three ſtreets, in admiration at the unlimited power of the tender paſſion, that could ſoften even the heart of a butcher. We then adjourned to a tavern, and from thence to one of the publick gardens, where I was regaled with a moſt amuſing variety of men poſſeſſing great talents, ſo diſcoloured by affectation, that they only made them eminently ridiculous; ſhallow things, who, by continual diſſipation, had annihilated the few ideas nature had given them, and yet were celebrated for wonderful pretty Gentlemen; young Ladies extolled for their Wit, becauſe they were handſome; illiterate empty women as well as men, in high life, admired for their Knowledge, from their being reſolutely poſitive; and women of real underſtanding ſo far from pleaſing the polite million, that they

frightened then away, and were left ſolitary. When we quitted this entertaining ſcene, *Tom* preſſed me, irreſiſtibly, to ſup with him. I reached home at twelve, and then reflected, that though indeed I had, by remarking various characters, improved my inſight into human nature, yet ſtill I had neglected the ſtudies propoſed, and accordingly took up my *Treatiſe on Logick*, to give it the intended reviſal, but found my ſpirits too much agitated, and could not forbear a few ſatyrical lines, under the title of *The Evening's Walk*.

"*Tueſday.*] At breakfaſt, ſeeing my *Ode to Aſtronomy* lying on my deſk, I was ſtruck with a train of ideas, that I thought might contribute to its improvement. I immediately rang my bell to forbid all viſitants, when my ſervant opened the door, with, "Sir, Mr. "*Jeffery Gape.*" My cup dropped out of one hand, and my poem out of the other. I could ſcarce aſk him to ſit; he told me he was going to walk, but as there was a likelihood of rain, he would ſit with me; he ſaid, he intended at firſt to have called at Mr. *Vacant's*, but as he had not ſeen me a great while, he did not mind coming out of his way to wait on

on me; I made him a bow, but thanks for the favour ſtuck in my throat, I aſked him if he had been to the coffee-houſe. He replied two hours.

"UNDER the oppreſſion of this dull interruption, I ſat looking wiſhfully at the clock; for which, to increaſe my ſatisfaction, I had choſen the inſcription, *Art is long, and Life is ſhort*; exchanging queſtions and anſwers at long intervals, and not without ſome hints that the weather-glaſs promiſed fair weather. At half an hour after three he told me he would treſpaſs on me for a dinner, and deſired me to ſend to his houſe for a bundle of papers, about incloſing a common upon his eſtate, which he would read to me in the evening. I declared myſelf buſy, and Mr. *Gape* went away.

"HAVING dined, to compoſe my chagrin I took up *Virgil*, and ſeveral other Claſſicks, but could not calm my mind, or proceed in my ſcheme. At about five I laid my hand on a Bible that lay on my table, at firſt with coldneſs and inſenſibility; but was imperceptibly engaged in a cloſe attention to its ſub-

lime morality, and felt my heart expanded by warm philanthropy, and exalted to dignity of ſentiment; I then cenſured my too great ſolicitude, and my diſguſt conceived at my acquaintance, who had been ſo far from deſigning to offend, that he only meant to ſhew kindneſs and reſpect. In this ſtrain of mind I wrote *An Eſſay on Benevolence*, and *An Elegy on ſublunary Diſappointments*. When I had finiſhed theſe, at eleven, I ſupped, and recollected how little I had adhered to my plan, and almoſt queſtioned the poſſibility of purſuing any ſettled and uniform deſign; however, I was not ſo far perſuaded of the truth of theſe ſuggeſtions, but that I reſolved to try once more at my ſcheme. As I obſerved the moon ſhining through my window, from a calm and bright ſky ſpangled with innumerable ſtars, I indulged a pleaſing meditation on the ſplendid ſcene, and finiſhed my *Ode to Aſtronomy*.

" *Wedneſday.*] Rose at ſeven, and employed three hours in peruſal of the *Scriptures* with *Grotius's Comment*; and after breakfaſt fell into meditation concerning my projected *Epick*; and being in ſome doubt as to the particular lives of ſome Heroes, whom I propoſed

poſed to celebrate, I conſulted *Bayle* and *Moreri*, and was engaged two hours in examining various lives and characters, but then reſolved to go to my employment. When I was ſeated at my deſk, and began to feel the glowing ſucceſſion of poetical ideas, my ſervant brought me a letter from a Lawyer, requiring my inſtant attendance at *Gray's Inn* for half an hour. I went full of vexation, and was involved in buſineſs till eight at night; and then, being too much fatigued to ſtudy, ſupped, and went to bed."

HERE my friend's Journal concludes, which perhaps is pretty much a picture of the manner in which many proſecute their ſtudies. I therefore reſolved to ſend it you, imagining, that if you think it worthy of appearing in your Paper, ſome of your Readers may receive entertainment by recognizing a reſemblance between my friend's conduct and their own. It muſt be left to the *Idler* accurately to aſcertain the proper methods of advancing in literature; but this one poſition, deducible from what has been ſaid above, may, I think, be reaſonably aſſerted, that he who finds himſelf ſtrongly attracted to any particular ſtudy, though

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it may happen to be out of his propoſed ſcheme, if it is not trifling or vicious, had better continue his application to it, ſince it is likely that he will, with much more eaſe and expedition, attain that which a warm inclination ſtimulates him to purſue, than that at which a preſcribed law compells him to toil.

I am, &c.

N° 68. *Saturday, Auguſt* 4.

AMONG the ſtudies which have exerciſed the ingenious and the learned for more than three centuries, none has been more diligently or more ſucceſsfully cultivated than the art of Tranſlation; by which the impediments which bar the way to ſcience are, in ſome meaſure, removed, and the multiplicity of languages becomes leſs incommodious.

OF every other kind of writing the ancients have left us models which all ſucceeding ages have laboured to imitate; but Tranſlation

tion may juſtly be claimed by the moderns as their own. In the firſt ages of the world inſtruction was commonly oral, and learning traditional, and what was not written could not be tranſlated. When alphabetical writing made the conveyance of opinions and the tranſmiſſion of events more eaſy and certain, literature did not flouriſh in more than one country at once, or diſtant nations had little commerce with each other; and thoſe few whom curioſity ſent abroad in queſt of improvement, delivered their acquiſitions in their own manner, deſirous perhaps to be conſidered as the inventors of that which they had learned from others.

THE *Greeks* for a time travelled into *Egypt*, but they tranſlated no books from the *Egyptian* language; and when the *Macedonians* had overthrown the Empire of *Perſia*, the countries that became ſubject to *Grecian* dominion ſtudied only the *Grecian* literature. The books of the conquered nations, if they had any among them, ſunk into oblivion; *Greece* conſidered herſelf as the Miſtreſs if not as the Parent of Arts, her language contained all that was ſuppoſed to be known, and, except the ſacred Writings of the Old Teſtament, I know

know not that the Library of *Alexandria* adopted any thing from a foreign tongue.

THE *Romans* confeſſed themſelves the ſcholars of the *Greeks*, and do not appear to have expected, what has ſince happened, that the ignorance of ſucceeding ages would prefer them to their teachers. Every man who in *Rome* aſpired to the praiſe of literature, thought it neceſſary to learn *Greek*, and had no need of verſions when they could ſtudy the originals. Tranſlation, however, was not wholly neglected. Dramatick poems could be underſtood by the people in no language but their own, and the *Romans* were ſometimes entertained with the Tragedies of *Euripides* and the Comedies of *Menander*. Other works were ſometimes attempted; in an old Scholiaſt there is mention of a *Latin Iliad*, and we have not wholly loſt *Tully's* verſion of the Poem of *Aratus*; but it does not appear that any man grew eminent by interpreting another, and perhaps it was more frequent to tranſlate for exerciſe or amuſement, than for fame.

THE *Arabs* were the firſt nation who felt the ardour of Tranſlation; when they had ſubdued

ſubdued the eaſtern provinces of the *Greek* Empire, they found their captives wiſer than themſelves, and made haſte to relieve their wants by imparted knowledge. They diſcovered that many might grow wiſe by the labour of a few, and that improvements might be made with ſpeed, when they had the knowledge of former ages in their own language. They therefore made haſte to lay hold on Medicine and Philoſophy, and turned their chief authors into *Arabic*. Whether they attempted the Poets is not known; their literary zeal was vehement, but it was ſhort, and probably expired before they had time to add the arts of elegance to thoſe of neceſſity.

THE ſtudy of ancient literature was interrupted in *Europe* by the irruption of the northern nations, who ſubverted the *Roman* Empire, and erected new kingdoms with new languages. It is not ſtrange, that ſuch confuſion ſhould ſuſpend literary attention; thoſe who loſt, and thoſe who gained dominion, had immediate difficulties to encounter, and immediate miſeries to redreſs, and had little leiſure, amidſt the violence of war, the trepidation of flight, the diſtreſſes of forced migration, or the tumults

tumults of unſettled conqueſt, to enquire after ſpeculative truth, to enjoy the amuſement of imaginary adventures, to know the hiſtory of former ages, or ſtudy the events of any other lives. But no ſooner had this chaos of dominion ſunk into order, than learning began again to flouriſh in the calm of peace. When life and poſſeſſions were ſecure, convenience and enjoyment were ſoon ſought, learning was found the higheſt gratification of the mind, and Tranſlation became one of the means by which it was imparted.

At laſt, by a concurrrence of many cauſes, the *European* world was rouzed from its lethargy; thoſe arts which had been long obſcurely ſtudied in the gloom of monaſteries became the general favourites of mankind; every nation vied with its neighbour for the prize of learning; the epidemical emulation ſpread from ſouth to north, and Curioſity and Tranſlation found their way to *Britain*.

N° 69. *Saturday, Auguſt* 11.

HE that reviews the progreſs of *Engliſh* Literature, will find that Tranſlation was very early cultivated among us, but that ſome principles, either wholly erroneous or too far extended, hindered our ſucceſs from being always equal to our diligence.

CHAUCER, who is generally conſidered as the Father of our Poetry, has left a Verſion of *Boetius on the Comforts of Philoſophy*, the book which ſeems to have been the favourite of the middle ages, which had been tranſlated into *Saxon* by King *Alfred*, and illuſtrated with a copious *Comment* aſcribed to *Aquinas*. It may be ſuppoſed that *Chaucer* would apply more than common attention to an Author of ſo much celebrity, yet has attempted nothing higher than a verſion ſtrictly literal, and has degraded the poetical parts to proſe, that the conſtraint of verſification might not obſtruct his zeal for fidelity.

CAXTON

CAXTON taught us Typography about the year 1474. The firſt book printed in *Engliſh* was a tranſlation. *Caxton* was both the Tranſlator and Printer of the *Deſtruccion of Troye*, a book which, in that infancy of learning, was conſidered as the beſt account of the fabulous ages, and which, though now driven out of notice by Authors of no greater uſe or value, ſtill continued to be read in *Caxton's Engliſh* to the beginning of the preſent century.

CAXTON proceeded as he began, and, except the Poems of *Gower* and *Chaucer*, printed nothing but Tranſlations from the *French*, in which the original is ſo ſcrupulouſly followed, that they afford us little knowledge of our own language; though the words are *Engliſh*, the phraſe is foreign.

As Learning advanced, new works were adopted into our language, but I think with little improvement of the art of Tranſlation, though foreign nations and other languages offered us models of a better method; till in the age of *Elizabeth* we began to find that greater liberty was neceſſary to elegance, and that elegance was neceſſary to general reception;

tion; ſome eſſays were then made upon the *Italian* Poets which deſerve the praiſe and gratitude of Poſterity.

BUT the old practice was not ſuddenly forſaken; *Holland* filled the nation with literal Tranſlation, and, what is yet more ſtrange, the ſame exactneſs was obſtinately practiſed in the verſions of the Poets. This abſurd labour of conſtruing into rhyme was countenanced by *Jonſon* in his verſion of *Horace*; and whether it be that more men have learning than genius, or that the endeavours of that time were more directed towards knowledge than delight, the accuracy of *Johnſon* found more imitators than the elegance of *Fairfax*; and *May*, *Sandys*, and *Holiday*, confined themſelves to the toil of rendering line for line, not indeed with equal felicity, for *May* and *Sandys* were Poets, and *Holiday* only a ſcholar and a critick.

FELTHAM appears to conſider it as the eſtabliſhed law of Poetical Tranſlation, that the lines ſhould be neither more nor fewer than thoſe of the original; and ſo long had this prejudice prevailed, that *Denham* praiſes *Fanſhaw's* verſion of *Guarini* as the example of a

new and noble way, as the firſt attempt to break the boundaries of cuſtom and aſſert the natural freedom of the Muſe.

In the general emulation of wit and genius which the feſtivity of the Reſtoration produced, the Poets ſhook off their conſtraint, and conſidered Tranſlation as no longer confined to ſervile cloſeneſs. But reformation is ſeldom the work of pure virtue or unaſſiſted reaſon. Tranſlation was improved more by accident than conviction. The writers of the foregoing age had at leaſt learning equal to their genius, and being often more able to explain the ſentiments or illuſtrate the alluſions of the Ancients, than to exibit their graces and transfuſe their ſpirit, were perhaps willing ſometimes to conceal their want of Poetry by profuſion of Literature, and therefore tranſlated literally, that their fidelity might ſhelter their inſipidity or harſhneſs. The Wits of *Charles's* time had ſeldom more than ſlight and ſuperficial views, and their care was to hide their want of learning behind the colours of a gay imagination; they therefore tranſlated always with freedom, ſometimes with licentiouſneſs, and perhaps expected that their readers

readers ſhould accept ſpritelineſs for knowledge, and conſider ignorance and miſtake as the impatience and negligence of a mind too rapid to ſtop at difficulties, and too elevated to deſcend to minuteneſs.

THUS was Tranſlation made more eaſy to the Writer, and more delightful to the Reader; and there is no wonder if eaſe and pleaſure have found their advocates. The paraphraſtic liberties have been almoſt univerſally admitted; and *Sherbourn*, whoſe learning was eminent, and who had no need of any excuſe to paſs ſlightly over obſcurities, is the only Writer who in later times has attempted to juſtify or revive the ancient ſeverity.

THERE is undoubtedly a mean to be obſerved. *Dryden* ſaw very early that cloſeneſs beſt preſerved an Author's ſenſe, and that freedom beſt exhibited his ſpirit; he therefore will deſerve the higheſt praiſe, who can give a repreſentation at once faithful and pleaſing, who can convey the ſame thoughts with the ſame graces, and who when he tranſlates changes nothing but the language.

N° 70. *Saturday, Auguſt* 18.

FEW faults of ſtyle, whether real or imaginary, excite the malignity of a more numerous claſs of readers, than the uſe of hard words.

IF an Author be ſuppoſed to involve his thoughts in voluntary obſcurity, and to obſtruct, by unneceſſary difficulties, a mind eager in purſuit of truth; if he writes not to make others learned, but to boaſt the learning which he poſſeſſes himſelf, and wiſhes to be admired rather than underſtood, he counteracts the firſt end of writing, and juſtly ſuffers the utmoſt ſeverity of cenſure, or the more afflictive ſeverity of neglect.

BUT words are only hard to thoſe who do not underſtand them, and the Critick ought always to enquire, whether he is incommoded by the fault of the Writer, or by his own.

EVERY Author does not write for every Reader; many queſtions are ſuch as the illiterate part

part of mankind can have neither intereſt nor pleaſure in diſcuſſing, and which therefore it would be an uſeleſs endeavour to level with common minds, by tireſome circumlocutions or laborious explanations; and many ſubjects of general uſe may be treated in a different manner, as the book is intended for the learned or the ignorant. Diffuſion and explication are neceſſary to the inſtruction of thoſe who, being neither able nor accuſtomed to think for themſelves, can learn only what is expreſsly taught; but they who can form parallels, diſcover conſequences, and multiply concluſions, are beſt pleaſed with involution of argument and compreſſion of thought; they deſire only to receive the ſeeds of knowledge which they may branch out by their own power, to have the way to truth pointed out which they can then follow without a guide.

THE Guardian directs one of his pupils *to think with the wiſe, but ſpeak with the vulgar.* This is a precept ſpecious enough, but not always practicable. Difference of thoughts will produce difference of language. He that thinks with more extent than another will want words of larger meaning; he that thinks with more

ſubtilty will ſeek for terms of more nice diſcrimination; and where is the wonder, ſince words are but the images of things, that he who never knew the originals ſhould not know the copies?

YET vanity inclines us to find faults any where rather than in ourſelves. He that reads and grows no wiſer, ſeldom ſuſpects his own deficiency: but complains of hard words and obſcure ſentences, and aſks why books are written which cannot be underſtood.

AMONG the hard words which are no longer to be uſed, it has been long the cuſtom to number terms of art. *Every man* (ſays *Swift*) *is more able to explain the ſubject of an art than its profeſſors; a Farmer will tell you, in two words, that he has broken his leg; but a Surgeon, after a long diſcourſe, ſhall leave you as ignorant as you were before.* This could only have been ſaid by ſuch an exact obſerver of life, in gratification of malignity, or in oſtentation of acuteneſs. Every hour produces inſtances of the neceſſity of terms of art. Mankind could never conſpire in uniform affectation; it is not but by neceſſity that every ſcience and every

every trade has its peculiar language. They that content themſelves with general ideas may reſt in general terms; but thoſe whoſe ſtudies or employments force them upon cloſer inſpection, muſt have names for particular parts, and words by which they may expreſs various modes of combination, ſuch as none but themſelves have occaſion to conſider.

ARTISTS are indeed ſometimes ready to ſuppoſe that none can be ſtrangers to words to which themſelves are familiar, talk to an incidental enquirer as they talk to one another, and make their knowledge ridiculous by injudicious obtruſion. An art cannot be taught but by its proper terms, but it is not always neceſſary to teach the art.

THAT the vulgar expreſs their thoughts clearly is far from true; and what perſpicuity can be found among them proceeds not from the eaſineſs of their language, but the ſhallowneſs of their thoughts. He that ſees a building as a common ſpectator, contents himſelf with relating that it is great or little, mean or ſplendid, lofty or low; all theſe words are intelligible and common, but they convey no diſtinct or limited ideas; if he attempts, with-

out the terms of architecture, to delineate the parts, or enumerate the ornaments, his narration at once becomes unintelligible. The terms, indeed, generally diſpleaſe, becauſe they are underſtood by few; but they are little underſtood only becauſe few, that look upon an edifice, examine its parts, or analyſe its columns into their members.

The ſtate of every other art is the ſame; as it is curſorily ſurveyed or accurately examined, different forms of expreſſion become proper. In Morality it is one thing to diſcuſs the niceties of the caſuiſt, and another to direct the practice of common life. In Agriculture, he that inſtructs the farmer to plough and ſow, may convey his notions without the words which he would find neceſſary in explaining to Philoſophers the proceſs of vegetation; and if he, who has nothing to do but to be honeſt by the ſhorteſt way, will perplex his mind with ſubtile ſpeculations; or if he whoſe taſk is to reap and threſh will not be contented without examining the evolution of the ſeed and circulation of the ſap, the writers whom either ſhall conſult are very little to be blamed, tho' it ſhould ſometimes happen that they are read in vain.

N° 71. *Saturday, Auguſt* 25.

DICK SHIFTER was born in *Cheapſide*, and having paſſed reputably thro' all the claſſes of St. *Paul's* ſchool, has been for ſome years a Student in the *Temple*. He is of opinion that intenſe application dulls the faculties, and thinks it neceſſary to temper the ſeverity of the Law by books that engage the mind, but do not fatigue it. He has therefore made a copious collection of Plays, Poems, and Romances, to which he has recourſe when he fancies himſelf tired with Statutes and Reports, and he ſeldom enquires very nicely whether he is weary or idle.

DICK has received from his favourite Authors very ſtrong impreſſions of a country life; and tho' his furtheſt excurſions have been to *Greenwich* on one ſide, and *Chelſea* on the other, he has talked for ſeveral years, with great pomp of language and elevation of ſen-

timents, about a ſtate too high for contempt and too low for envy, about homely quiet and blameleſs ſimplicity, paſtoral delights and rural innocence.

His friends who had eſtates in the country often invited him to paſs the ſummer among them, but ſomething or other had always hindered him; and he conſidered, that to reſide in the houſe of another man, was to incur a kind of dependence inconſiſtent with that laxity of life which he had imaged as the chief good.

This ſummer he reſolved to be happy, and procured a lodging to be taken for him at a ſolitary houſe, ſituated about thirty miles from *London*, on the banks of a ſmall river, with corn fields before it, and a hill on each ſide covered with wood. He concealed the place of his retirement that none might violate his obſcurity, and promiſed himſelf many a happy day when he ſhould hide himſelf among the trees, and contemplate the tumults and vexations of the town.

He ſtepped into the poſt-chaiſe with his heart beating and his eyes ſparkling, was conveyed

veyed through many varieties of delightful proſpects, ſaw hills and meadows, corn fields and paſture, ſucceed each other, and for four hours charged none of his Poets with fiction or exaggeration. He was now within ſix miles of happineſs, when having never felt ſo much agitation before, he began to wiſh his journey at an end, and the laſt hour was paſſed in changing his poſture, and quarrelling with his driver.

An hour may be tedious, but cannot be long; he at length alighted at his new dwelling, and was received as he expected; he looked round upon the hills and rivulets, but his joints were ſtiff and his muſcles ſore, and his firſt requeſt was to ſee his bed-chamber.

He reſted well, and aſcribed the ſoundneſs of his ſleep to the ſtillneſs of the country. He expected from that time nothing but nights of quiet and days of rapture, and as ſoon as he had riſen, wrote an account of his new ſtate to one of his friends in the *Temple*.

Dear Frank,

I never pitied thee before. I am now as I could wiſh every man of wiſdom and virtue

to be, in the regions of calm content and placid meditation; with all the beauties of Nature ſolliciting my notice, and all the diverſities of Pleaſure courting my acceptance; the birds are chirping in the hedges, and the flowers blooming in the mead; the breeze is whiſtling in the woods, and the Sun dancing on the water. I can now ſay with truth, that a man capable of enjoying the purity of happineſs, is never more buſy than in his hours of leiſure, nor ever leſs ſolitary than in a place of ſolitude.

I am, dear FRANK, &c.

WHEN he had ſent away his letter, he walked into the wood with ſome inconvenience from the furze that pricked his legs, and the briars that ſcratched his face; he at laſt ſat down under a tree, and heard with great delight a ſhower, by which he was not wet, rattling among the branches: This, ſaid he, is the true image of obſcurity; we hear of troubles and commotions, but never feel them.

HIS amuſement did not overpower the calls of nature, and he therefore went back to order his dinner. He knew that the country produces whatever is eaten or drunk, and ima-

imagining that he was now at the ſource of luxury, reſolved to indulge himſelf with dainties which he ſuppoſed might be procured at a price next to nothing, if any price at all was expected; and intended to amaze the ruſticks with his generoſity, by paying more than they would aſk. Of twenty diſhes which he named, he was amazed to find that ſcarce one was to be had, and heard with aſtoniſhment and indignation, that all the fruits of the earth were ſold at a higher price than in the ſtreets of *London*.

His meal was ſhort and ſullen, and he retired again to his tree, to enquire how dearneſs could be conſiſtent with abundance, or how fraud ſhould be practiſed by ſimplicity. He was not ſatisfied with his own ſpeculations, and returning home early in the evening went a while from window to window, and found that he wanted ſomething to do.

He enquired for a News-paper, and was told that farmers never minded news, but that they could ſend for it from the ale-houſe. A meſſenger was diſpatched, who ran away at full ſpeed, but loitered an hour behind the

hedges, and at laſt coming back with his feet purpoſely bemired, inſtead of expreſſing the gratitude which Mr. *Shifter* expected for the bounty of a ſhilling, ſaid that the night was wet, and the way dirty, and he hoped that his worſhip would not think it much to give him half a crown.

Dick now went to bed with ſome abatement of his expectations; but ſleep, I know not how, revives our hopes and rekindles our deſires. He roſe early in the morning, ſurveyed the landſcape, and was pleaſed. He walked out, and paſſed from field to field, without obſerving any beaten path, and wondered that he had not ſeen the ſhepherdeſſes dancing, nor heard the ſwains piping to their flocks.

At laſt he ſaw ſome reapers and harveſt-women at dinner. Here, ſaid he, are the true *Arcadians*, and advanced courteouſly towards them, as afraid of confuſing them by the dignity of his preſence. They acknowledged his ſuperiority by no other token than that of aſking him for ſomething to drink. He imagined that he had now purchaſed the privilege of diſcourſe, and began to deſcend to familiar

familiar queſtions, endeavouring to accommodate his diſcourſe to the groſſneſs of ruſtick underſtandings. The clowns ſoon found that he did not know wheat from rye, and began to deſpiſe him; one of the boys, by pretending to ſhew him a bird's neſt, decoyed him into a ditch, and one of the wenches ſold him a bargain.

THIS walk had given him no great pleaſure, but he hoped to find other ruſticks leſs coarſe of manners, and leſs miſchievous of diſpoſition. Next morning he was accoſted by an Attorney, who told him, that unleſs he made Farmer *Dobſon* ſatisfaction for trampling his graſs, he had orders to indict him. *Shifter* was offended, but not terrified; and telling the Attorney that he was himſelf a Lawyer, talked ſo volubly of Pettifoggers and Barraters, that he drove him away.

FINDING his walks thus interrupted, he was inclined to ride, and being pleaſed with the appearance of a horſe that was grazing in a neighbouring meadow, enquired the owner, who warranted him ſound, and would not ſell him, but that he was too fine for a plain man.

Dick paid down the price, and riding out to enjoy the evening, fell with his new horſe into a ditch; they got out with difficulty, and as he was going to mount again, a country-man looked at the horſe, and perceived him to be blind. *Dick* went to the ſeller, and demanded back his money; but was told, that a man who rented his ground muſt do the beſt for himſelf, that his landlord had his rent though the year was barren, and that whether horſes had eyes or no, he ſhould ſell them to the higheſt bidder.

SHIFTER now began to be tired with ruſtick ſimplicity, and on the fifth day took poſſeſſion again of his Chambers, and bad farewel to the regions of calm Content and placid Meditation.

N° 72. *Saturday, September* 1.

MEN complain of nothing more frequently than of deficient Memory; and, indeed, every one finds that many of the ideas which he desired to retain have slipped irretrievably away; that the acquisitions of the mind are sometimes equally fugitive with the gifts of fortune; and that a short intermission of attention more certainly lessens knowledge than impairs an estate.

To assist this weakness of our nature many methods have been proposed, all of which may be justly suspected of being ineffectual; for no art of memory, however its effects have been boasted or admired, has been ever adopted into general use, nor have those who possessed it appeared to excel others in readiness of recollection or multiplicy of attainments.

THERE is another art of which all have felt the want, though *Themistocles* only confessed it.

it. We ſuffer equal pain from the pertinacious adheſion of unwelcome images, as from the evaneſcence of thoſe which are pleaſing and uſeful; and it may be doubted whether we ſhould be more benefited by the art of Memory or the art of Forgetfulneſs.

Forgetfulness is neceſſary to Remembrance. Ideas are retained by renovation of that impreſſion which time is always wearing away, and which new images are ſtriving to obliterate. If uſeleſs thoughts could be expelled from the mind, all the valuable parts of our knowledge would more frequently recur, and every recurrence would reinſtate them in their former place.

It is impoſſible to conſider, without ſome regret, how much might have been learned, or how much might have been invented, by a rational and vigorous application of time, uſeleſsly or painfully paſſed in the revocation of events, which have left neither good nor evil behind them, in grief for misfortunes either repaired or irreparable, in reſentment of injuries known only to ourſelves, of which death has put the authors beyond our power.

PHILOSOPHY has accumulated precept upon precept, to warn us againſt the anticipation of future calamities. All uſeleſs miſery is certainly folly, and he that feels evils before they come may be deſervedly cenſured; yet ſurely to dread the future is more reaſonable than to lament the paſt. The buſineſs of life is to go forwards: he who ſees evil in proſpect meets it in his way, but he who catches it by retroſpection turns back to find it. That which is feared may ſometimes be avoided, but that which is regretted to-day may be regretted again to-morrow.

REGRET is indeed uſeful and virtuous, and not only allowable but neceſſary, when it tends to the amendment of life, or to admonition of error which we may be again in danger of committing, But a very ſmall part of the moments ſpent in meditation on the paſt, produce any reaſonable caution or ſalutary ſorrow. Moſt of the mortifications that we have ſuffered, aroſe from the concurrence of local and temporary circumſtances, which can never meet again; and moſt of our diſappointments have ſucceeded thoſe expectations, which life allows not to be formed a ſecond time.

It would add much to human happineſs, if an art could be taught of forgetting all of which the remembrance is at once uſeleſs and afflictive, if that pain which never can end in pleaſure could be driven totally away, that the mind might perform its functions without incumbrance, and the paſt might no longer encroach upon the preſent.

Little can be done well to which the whole mind is not applied; the buſineſs of every day calls for the day to which it is aſſigned; and he will have no leiſure to regret yeſterday's vexations who reſolves not to have a new ſubject of regret to-morrow.

But to forget or to remember at pleaſure, are equally beyond the power of man. Yet as memory may be aſſiſted by method, and the decays of knowledge repaired by ſtated times of recollection, ſo the power of forgetting is capable of improvement. Reaſon will, by a reſolute conteſt, prevail over imagination, and the power may be obtained of transferring the attention as judgment ſhall direct.

The incurſions of troubleſome thoughts are often violent and importunate; and it

is not eaſy to a mind accuſtomed to their inroads to expel them immediately by putting better images into motion; but this enemy of quiet is above all others weakened by every defeat; the reflection which has been once overpowered and ejected, ſeldom returns with any formidable vehemence.

EMPLOYMENT is the great inſtrument of intellectual dominion. The mind cannot retire from its enemy into total vacancy, or turn aſide from one object but by paſſing to another. The gloomy and the reſentful are always found among thoſe who have nothing to do, or who do nothing. We muſt be buſy about good or evil, and he to whom the preſent offers nothing will often be looking backward on the paſt.

N° 73. *Saturday, September* 8.

THAT every man would be rich if a wiſh could obtain riches, is a poſition, which I believe few will conteſt, at leaſt in a nation like ours, in which commerce has kindled an univerſal emulation of wealth, and in which money receives all the honours which are the proper right of knowledge and of virtue.

YET though we are all labouring for gold as for the chief good, and, by the natural effort of unwearied diligence, have found many expeditious methods of obtaining it, we have not been able to improve the art of uſing it, or to make it produce more happineſs than it afforded in former times, when every declaimer expatiated on its miſchiefs, and every philoſopher taught his followers to deſpiſe it.

MANY of the dangers imputed of old to exorbitant wealth, are now at an end. The rich are neither waylaid by robbers, nor watched

watched by informers; there is nothing to be dreaded from proſcriptions, or ſeizures. The neceſſity of concealing treaſure has long ceaſed; no man now needs counterfeit mediocrity, and condemn his plate and jewels to caverns and darkneſs, or feaſt his mind with the conſciouſneſs of clouded ſplendour, of finery which is uſeleſs till it is ſhewn, and which he dares not ſhew.

In our time the poor are ſtongly tempted to aſſume the appearance of wealth, but the wealthy very rarely deſire to be thought poor; for we are all at full liberty to diſplay riches by every mode of oſtentation. We fill our houſes with uſeleſs ornaments, only to ſhew that we can buy them; we cover our coaches with gold, and employ artiſts in the diſcovery of new faſhions of expence; and yet it cannot be found that riches produce happineſs.

Of riches, as of every thing elſe, the hope is more than the enjoyment; while we conſider them as the means to be uſed, at ſome future time, for the attainment of felicity, we preſs on our purſuit ardently and vigorouſly, and that ardour ſecures us from wearineſs of ourſelves;

ourſelves; but no ſooner do we ſit down to enjoy our acquiſitions, than we find them inſufficient to fill up the vacuities of life.

ONE cauſe which is not always obſerved of the inſufficiency of riches, is, that they very ſeldom make their owner rich. To be rich, is to have more than is deſired, and more than is wanted; to have ſomething which may be ſpent without reluctance, and ſcattered without care, with which the ſudden demands of deſire may be gratified, the caſual freaks of fancy indulged, or the unexpected opportuinties of benevolence improved.

AVARICE is always poor, but poor by her own fault. There is another poverty to which the rich are expoſed with leſs guilt by the officiouſneſs of others. Every man, eminent for exuberance of fortune, is ſurrounded from morning to evening, and from evening to midnight, by flatterers, whoſe art of adulation conſiſts in exciting artificial wants, and in forming new ſchemes of profuſion.

TOM TRANQUIL, when he came to age, found himſelf in poſſeſſion of a fortune, of which the twentieth part might perhaps have made

made him rich. His temper is eaſy, and his affections ſoft; he receives every man with kindneſs, and hears him with credulity. His friends took care to ſettle him by giving him a wife, whom, having no particular inclination, he rather accepted than choſe, becauſe he was told that ſhe was proper for him.

He was now to live with dignity proportionate to his fortune. What his fortune requires or admits *Tom* does not know, for he has little ſkill in computation, and none of his friends think it their intereſt to improve it. If he was ſuffered to live by his own choice, he would leave every thing as he finds it, and paſs through the world diſtinguiſhed only by inoffenſive gentleneſs. But the miniſters of luxury have marked him out as one at whoſe expence they may exerciſe their arts. A companion, who had juſt learned the names of the *Italian* Maſters, runs from ſale to ſale, and buys pictures, for which Mr. *Tranquil* pays, without enquiring where they ſhall be hung. Another fills his garden with ſtatues, which *Tranquil* wiſhes away, but dares not remove. One of his Friends is learning Architecture by building him a houſe, which he paſſed by, and enquired

quired to whom it belonged; another has been for three years digging canals and raiſing mounts, cutting trees down in one place, and planting them in another, on which *Tranquil* looks with ſerene indifference, without aſking what will be the coſt. Another projector tells him that a water-work, like that of *Verſailles*, will complete the beauties of his ſeat, and lays his draughts before him; *Tranquil* turns his eyes upon them, and the artiſt begins his explanations; *Tranquil* raiſes no objections, but orders him to begin the work, that he may eſcape from talk which he does not underſtand.

THUS a thouſand hands are buſy at his expence, without addlng to his pleaſures. He pays and receives viſits, and has loitered in publick or in ſolitude, talking in ſummer of the town, and in winter of the country, without knowing that his fortune is impaired, till his Steward told him this morning, that he could pay the workmen no longer but by mortgaging a manor.

N° 74. *Saturday, September* 15.

IN the mythological pedigree of learning, Memory is made the mother of the Muſes, by which the maſters of ancient Wiſdom, perhaps, meant to ſhew the neceſſity of ſtoring the mind copiouſly with true notions, before the imagination ſhould be ſuffered to form fictions or collect embelliſhments; for the works of an ignorant Poet can afford nothing higher than pleaſing ſound, and fiction is of no other uſe than to diſplay the treaſures of Memory.

THE neceſſity of Memory to the acquiſition of Knowledge is inevitably felt and univerſally allowed, ſo that ſcarcely any other of the mental faculties are commonly conſidered as neceſſary to a Student: he that admires the proficiency of another, always attributes it to the happineſs of his Memory; and he that laments his own defects, concludes with a wiſh that his Memory was better.

It is evident, that when the power of retention is weak, all the attempts at eminence of knowledge muſt be vain; and as few are willing to be doomed to perpetual ignorance, I may, perhaps, afford conſolation to ſome that have fallen too eaſily into deſpondence, by obſerving that ſuch weakneſs is, in my opinion, very rare, and that few have reaſon to complain of Nature as unkindly ſparing of the gifts of Memory.

In the common buſineſs of life, we find the Memory of one like that of another, and honeſtly impute omiſſions not to involuntary forgetfulneſs, but culpable inattention; but in literary inquiries, failure is imputed rather to want of Memory than of Diligence.

We conſider ourſelves as defective in Memory, either becauſe we remember leſs than we deſire, or leſs than we ſuppoſe others to remember.

Memory is like all other human powers, with which no man can be ſatisfied who meaſures them by what he can conceive, or by what he can deſire. He whoſe mind is moſt capa-

capacious, finds it much too narrow for his wiſhes: he that remembers moſt, remembers little compared with what he forgets. He therefore that, after the peruſal of a book, finds few ideas remaining in his mind, is not to conſider the diſappointment as peculiar to himſelf, or to reſign all hopes of improvement, becauſe he does not retain what even the author has perhaps forgotten.

He who compares his Memory with that of others, is often too haſty to lament the inequality. Nature has ſometimes, indeed, afforded examples of enormous, wonderful, and gigantick Memory. *Scaliger* reports of himſelf, that, in his youth, he could repeat above an hundred verſes, having once read them; and *Barthicus* declares, that he wrote his *Comment upon Claudian* without conſulting the text. But not to have ſuch degrees of Memory, is no more to be lamented, than not to have the ſtrength of *Hercules*, or the ſwiftneſs of *Achilles*. He that in the diſtribution of good has an equal ſhare with common men, may juſtly be contented. Where there is no ſtriking diſparity, it is difficult to know of two which remembers

moſt, and ſtill more difficult to diſcover which read with greater attention, which has renewed the firſt impreſſion by more frequent repetitions, or by what accidental combination of ideas either mind might have united any particular narrative or argument to its former ſtock.

But Memory, however impartially diſtributed, ſo often deceives our truſt, that almoſt every man attempts, by ſome artifice or other, to ſecure its fidelity.

It is the practice of many readers, to note in the margin of their books, the moſt important paſſages, the ſtrongeſt arguments, or the brighteſt ſentiments. Thus they load their minds with ſuperfluous attention, repreſs the vehemence of curioſity by uſeleſs deliberation, and by frequent interruption break the current of narration or the chain of reaſon, and at laſt cloſe the volume, and forget the paſſages and marks together.

Others I have found unalterably perſuaded, that nothing is certainly remembered but what is tranſcribed; and they have therefore

therefore paſſed weeks and months in tranſferring large quotations to a common-place book. Yet, why any part of a book, which can be conſulted at pleaſure, ſhould be copied, I was never able to diſcover. The hand has no cloſer correſpondence with the Memory than the eye. The act of writing itſelf diſtracts the thoughts, and what is read twice is commonly better remembered than what is tranſcribed. This method therefore conſumes time without aſſiſting Memory.

THE true Art of Memory is the Art of Attention. No man will read with much advantage, who is not able, at pleaſure, to evacuate his mind, or who brings not to his Author an intellect defecated and pure, neither turbid with care, nor agitated by pleaſure. If the repoſitories of thought are already full, what can they receive; if the mind is employed on the paſt or future, the book will be held before the eyes in vain. What is read with delight is commonly retained, becauſe pleaſure always ſecures attention; but the books which are conſulted by occaſional neceſſity, and peruſed with impatience, ſeldom leave any traces on the mind.

N° 75. *Saturday, September 22.*

IN the time when *Baſſora* was conſidered as the School of *Aſia*, and flouriſhed by the reputation of its profeſſors and the confluence of its ſtudents, among the pupils that liſtened round the chair of *Albumazar* was *Gelaleddin*, a native of *Tauris* in *Perſia*, a young man amiable in his manners and beautiful in his form, of boundleſs curioſity, inceſſant diligence, and irreſiſtible genius, of quick apprehenſion and tenacious memory, accurate without narrowneſs, and eager for novelty without inconſtancy.

No ſooner did *Gelaleddin* appear at *Baſſora*, than his virtues and abilities raiſed him to diſtinction. He paſſed from claſs to claſs, rather admired than envied by thoſe whom the rapidity of his progreſs left behind; he was conſulted by his fellow-ſtudents as an oraculous guide, and admitted as a com-

a competent auditor to the conferences of the Sages.

AFTER a few years, having paſſed through all the exerciſes of probation, *Gelaleddin* was invited to a Profeſſor's ſeat, and entreated to increaſe the ſplendour of *Baſſora*. *Gelaleddin* affected to deliberate on the propoſal, with which, before he conſidered it, he reſolved to comply; and next morning retired to a garden planted for the recreation of the ſtudents, and, entering a ſolitary walk, began to meditate upon his future life.

"IF I am thus eminent, ſaid he, in the "regions of Literature, I ſhall be yet more "conſpicuous in any other place: if I ſhould "now devote myſelf to ſtudy and retire-"ment, I muſt paſs my life in ſilence, un-"acquainted with the delights of wealth, the "influence of power, the pomp of great-"neſs, and the charms of elegance, with all "that man envies and deſires, with all that "keeps the world in motion, by the hope "of gaining or the fear of loſing it. I will "therefore depart to *Tauris*, where the *Per-*

" *ſian* Monarch reſides in all the ſplendour
" of abſolute dominion: my reputation will
" fly before me, my arrival will be congra-
" tulated by my kinſmen and my friends;
" I ſhall ſee the eyes of thoſe who predicted
" my greatneſs ſparkling with exultation,
" and the faces of thoſe that once deſpiſed me
" clouded with envy, or counterfeiting kind-
" neſs by artificial ſmiles. I will ſhew my
" wiſdom by my diſcourſe, and my modera-
" tion by my ſilence; I will inſtruct the mo-
" deſt with eaſy gentleneſs, and repreſs the
" oſtentatious by ſeaſonable ſuperciliouſneſs.
" My apartments will be crouded by the in-
" quiſitive and the vain, by thoſe that ho-
" nour and thoſe that rival me; my name
" will ſoon reach the Court; I ſhall ſtand
" before the throne of the Emperor; the
" Judges of the Law will confeſs my wiſdom,
" and the Nobles will contend to heap gifts
" upon me. If I ſhall find that my merit,
" like that of others, excites malignity, or
" feel myſelf tottering on the ſeat of eleva-
" tion, I may at laſt retire to academical ob-
" ſcurity, and become, in my loweſt ſtate,
" a Profeſſor of *Baſſora*."

HAVING

HAVING thus ſettled his determination, he declared to his friends his deſign of viſiting *Tauris*, and ſaw with more pleaſure than he ventured to expreſs, the regret with which he was diſmiſſed. He could not bear to delay the honours to which he was deſtined, and therefore haſted away, and in a ſhort time entered the capital of *Perſia*. He was immediately immerſed in the croud, and paſſed unobſerved to his father's houſe. He entered, and was received, though not unkindly, yet without any exceſs of fondneſs or exclamations of rapture. His father had, in his abſence, ſuffered many loſſes, and *Gelaleddin* was conſidered as an additional burthen to a falling family.

WHEN he recovered from his ſurprize, he began to diſplay his acquiſitions, and practiſed all the arts of narration and diſquiſition; but the poor have no leiſure to be pleaſed with eloquence; they heard his arguments without reflection, and his pleaſantries without a ſmile. He then applied himſelf ſingly to his brothers and ſiſters, but found them all chained down by invariable attention to their own fortunes, and inſenſible of any other excel-

lence than that which could bring ſome remedy for indigence.

It was now known in the neighbourhood that *Gelaleddin* was returned, and he ſate for ſome days in expectation that the Learned would viſit him for conſultation, or the Great for entertainment. But who will be pleaſed or inſtructed in the manſions of Poverty? He then frequented places of public reſort, and endeavoured to attract notice by the copiouſneſs of his talk. The ſpritely were ſilenced, and went away to cenſure in ſome other place his arrogance and his pedantry; and the dull liſtened quietly for a while, and then wondered why any man ſhould take pains to obtain ſo much knowledge which would never do him good.

He next ſolicited the Viſiers for employment, not doubting but his ſervice would be eagerly accepted. He was told by one that there was no vacancy in his office; by another, that his merit was above any patronage but that of the Emperor; by a third, that he would not forget him; and by the Chief Viſier, that he did not think literature of any great

great uſe in publick buſineſs. He was ſometimes admitted to their tables, where he exerted his wit and diffuſed his knowledge; but he obſerved, that where, by endeavour or accident, he had remarkably excelled, he was ſeldom invited a ſecond time.

He now returned to *Baſſora*, wearied and diſguſted, but confident of reſuming his former rank, and revelling again in ſatiety of praiſe. But he who had been neglected at *Tauris*, was not much regarded at *Baſſora*; he was conſidered as a fugitive, who returned only becauſe he could live in no other place; his companions found that they had formerly over-rated his abilities, and he lived long without notice or eſteem.

N° 76. *Saturday, September* 29.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

I WAS much pleaſed with your ridicule of thoſe ſhallow Criticks, whoſe Judgment, though often right as far as it goes, yet reaches only to inferior beauties, and who, unable to comprehend the whole, judge only by parts, and from thence determine the merit of extenſive works. But there is another kind of Critick ſtill worſe, who judges by narrow rules, and thoſe too often falſe, and which, though they ſhould be true, and founded on nature, will lead him but a very little way towards the juſt eſtimation of the ſublime beauties in works of Genius; for whatever part of an art can be executed or criticiſed by rules, that part is no longer the work of Genius, which implies excellence out of the reach of rules. For my own part, I profeſs

myſelf an Idler, and love to give my judgement, ſuch as it is, from my immediate perceptions, without much fatigue of thinking; and I am of opinion, that if a man has not thoſe perceptions right, it will be vain for him to endeavour to ſupply their place by rules, which may enable him to talk more learnedly, but not to diſtinguiſh more acutely. Another reaſon which has leſſened my affection for the ſtudy of Criticiſm is, that Criticks, ſo far as I have obſerved, debar themſelves from receiving any pleaſure from the polite arts, at the ſame time that they profeſs to love and admire them: for theſe rules, being always uppermoſt, give them ſuch a propenſity to criticize, that, inſtead of giving up the reins of their imagination into their Author's hands, their frigid minds are employed in examining whether the performance be according to the rules of art.

To thoſe who are reſolved to be Criticks in ſpite of Nature, and at the ſame time have no great diſpoſition to much reading and ſtudy, I would recommend to them to aſſume the character of Connoiſſeur, which may be purchaſed at a much cheaper rate than that

of a Critick in Poetry. The remembrance of a few names of Painters, with their general characters, with a few rules of the Academy, which they may pick up among the Painters, will go a great way towards making a very notable Connoiſſeur.

WITH a Gentleman of this caſt, I viſited laſt week the *Cartoons* at *Hampton-court*; he was juſt returned from *Italy*, a Connoiſſeur of courſe, and of courſe his mouth full of nothing but the Grace of *Raffaelle*, the Purity of *Domenichino*, the Learning of *Pouſſin*, the Air of *Guido*, the Greatneſs of Taſte of the *Caraches*, and the Sublimity and grand Contorno of *Michael Angelo*; with all the reſt of the cant of Criticiſm, which he emitted with that volubility which generally thoſe orators have who annex no ideas to their words.

As we were paſſing through the rooms, in our way to the Gallery, I made him obſerve a whole length of *Charles* the firſt by *Vandyke*, as a perfect repreſentation of the character as well as the figure of the man. He agreed it was very fine, but it wanted ſpirit and contraſt, and had not the flowing line, without

without which a figure could not poſſibly be graceful. When we entered the Gallery, I thought I could perceive him recollecting his Rules by which he was to criticize *Raffaelle*. I ſhall paſs over his obſervation of the boats being too little, and other criticiſms of that kind, till we arrived at St. *Paul preaching*. "This, ſays he, is eſteemed the moſt excellent of all the *Cartoons*; what nobleneſs, what dignity there is in that figure of St. *Paul!* and yet what an addition to that nobleneſs could *Raffaelle* have given, had the art of Contraſt been known in his time! but above all, the flowing line, which conſtitutes Grace and Beauty. You would not then have ſeen an upright figure ſtanding equally on both legs, and both hands ſtretched forward in the ſame direction, and his drapery, to all appearance, without the leaſt art of diſpoſiton." The following Picture is the *Charge to Peter*. "Here, ſays he, are twelve upright figures; what a pity it is that *Raffaelle* was not acquainted with the pyramidal principle! he would then have contrived the figures in the middle to have been on higher ground, or the figures at the extremities ſtooping or lying, which

which would not only have formed the group into the ſhape of a pyramid, but likewiſe contraſted the ſtanding figures. Indeed, added he, I have often lamented that ſo great a genius as *Raffaelle* had not lived in this enlightened age, ſince the art has been reduced to principles, and had had his education in one of the modern Academies; what glorious works might we then have expected from his divine pencil!"

I SHALL trouble you no longer with my friend's obſervations, which, I ſuppoſe, you are now able to continue by yourſelf. It is curious to obſerve, that, at the ſame time that great admiration is pretended for a name of fixed reputation, objections are raiſed againſt thoſe very qualities by which that great name was acquired.

THOSE Criticks are continually lamenting that *Raffaelle* had not the Colouring and Harmony of *Rubens*, or the Light and Shadow of *Rembrant*, without conſidering how much the gay Harmony of the former, and Affectation of the latter, would take from the Dignity of *Raffaelle*; and yet *Rubens* had great Harmony

Harmony, and *Rembrant* underſtood Light and Shadow; but what may be an excellence in a lower claſs of Painting, becomes a blemiſh in a higher; as the quick, ſpritely turn, which is the life and beauty of epigrammatick compoſitions, would but ill ſuit with the majeſty of heroick Poetry.

To conclude; I would not be thought to infer from any thing that has been ſaid, that Rules are abſolutely unneceſſary, but to cenſure ſcrupuloſity, a ſervile attention to minute exactneſs, which is ſometimes inconſiſtent with higher excellency, and is loſt in the blaze of expanded genius.

I DO not know whether you will think Painting a general ſubject. By inſerting this letter, perhaps you will incur the cenſure a man would deſerve, whoſe buſineſs being to entertain a whole room, ſhould turn his back to the company, and talk to a particular perſon.

I am, Sir, &c.

N° 77. *Saturday, October* 6.

EASY Poetry is univerſally admired, but I know not whether any rule has yet been fixed, by which it may be decided when Poetry can be properly called eaſy. *Horace* has told us, that it is ſuch as *every reader hopes to equal, but after long labour finds unattainable.* This is a very looſe deſcription, in which only the effect is noted; the qualities which produce this effect remain to be inveſtigated.

EASY Poetry is that in which natural thoughts are expreſſed without violence to the language. The diſcriminating character of Eaſe conſiſts principally in the diction, for all true Poetry requires that the ſentiments be natural. Language ſuffers violence by harſh or by daring figures, by tranſpoſition, by unuſual acceptations of words, and by any licence, which would be avoided by a Writer of Proſe. Where any artifice appears in the conſtruction of the verſe, that verſe is no longer eaſy.

Any

Any epithet which can be ejected without diminution of the ſenſe, any curious iteration of the ſame word, and all unuſual, though not ungrammatical ſtructure of ſpeech, deſtroy the grace of eaſy Poetry.

THE firſt lines of *Pope's* Iliad afford examples of many licences which an eaſy Writer muſt decline.

Achilles wrath, to Greece the *direful ſpring*
f woes unnumber'd, *heav'nly* Goddeſs ſing,
The wrath which *hurl'd* to Pluto's *gloomy reign*
The ſouls of *mighty* chiefs untimely ſlain.

IN the firſt couplet the language is diſtorted by inverſions, clogged with ſuperfluities, and clouded by a harſh metaphor; and in the ſecond there are two words uſed in an uncommon ſenſe, and two epithets inſerted only to lengthen the line; all theſe practices may in a long work eaſily be pardoned, but they always produce ſome degree of obſcurity and ruggedneſs.

EASY Poetry has been ſo long excluded by ambition of ornament, and luxuriance of imagery, that its nature ſeems now to be forgotten

forgotten. Affectation, however oppoſite to eaſe, is ſometimes miſtaken for it; and thoſe who aſpire to gentle elegance, collect female phraſes and faſhionable barbariſms, and imagine that ſtyle to be eaſy which cuſtom has made familiar. Such was the idea of the Poet who wrote the following verſes to a *Counteſs cutting Paper*.

Pallas grew *vap'riſh once and odd*,
She would not *do the leaſt right thing*
Either for Goddeſs or for God,
Nor work, nor play, nor paint, nor ſing.

Jove frown'd, and "Uſe (he cry'd) thoſe eyes
"So ſkilful, and thoſe hands ſo taper;
"Do ſomething exquiſite and wiſe"—
She bow'd, obey'd him, and cut paper.

This vexing him who gave her birth,
Thought by all heaven a *burning ſhame*,
What does ſhe next, but bids on earth
Her *Burlington* do juſt the ſame?

Pallas, you give yourſelf *ſtrange airs*;
But ſure you'll find it hard to ſpoil
The ſenſe and taſte of one that bears
The name of *Savile* and of *Boyle*.

Alas!

Alas! one bad example ſhown,
How quickly all the ſex purſue!
See, madam! ſee the arts o'erthrown
Between *John Overton* and *you*.

It is the prerogative of eaſy Poetry to be underſtood as long as the language laſts; but modes of ſpeech, which owe their prevalence only to modiſh folly, or to the eminence of thoſe that uſe them, die away with their inventors, and their meaning, in a few years, is no longer known.

Easy Poetry is commonly ſought in petty compoſitions upon minute ſubjects; but eaſe, though it excludes pomp, will admit greatneſs. Many lines in *Cato's* Soliloquy are at once eaſy and ſublime.

'Tis the Divinity that ſtirs within us;
'Tis Heaven itſelf that points out an hereafter,
And intimates eternity to man.
——— If there's a Power above us,
And that there is all Nature cries aloud
Thro' all her works, he muſt delight in virtue,
And that which he delights in muſt be happy.

Nor is eaſe more contrary to wit than to ſublimity; the celebrated ſtanza of *Cowley*, on a Lady

Lady elaborately dreſſed, loſes nothing of its freedom by the ſpirit of the ſentiment.

Th' adorning thee with ſo much art
Is but a bar'brous ſkill,
'Tis like the poiſ'ning of a dart,
Too apt before to kill.

Cowley ſeems to have poſſeſſed the power of writing eaſily beyond any other of our Poets, yet his purſuit of remote thoughts led him often into harſhneſs of expreſſion. *Waller* often attempted, but ſeldom attained it; for he is too frequently driven into tranſpoſitions. The Poets, from the time of *Dryden*, have gradually advanced in embelliſhment, and conſequently departed from ſimplicity and eaſe.

To require from any Author many pieces of eaſy Poetry, would be indeed to oppreſs him with too hard a taſk. It is leſs difficult to write a volume of lines ſwelled with epithets, brightened by figures, and ſtiffened by tranſpoſitions, than to produce a few couplets graced only by naked elegance and ſimple purity, which require ſo much care and

ſkill,

ſkill, that I doubt whether any of our Authors has yet been able, for twenty lines together, nicely to obſerve the true definition of eaſy Poetry.

N° 78. *Saturday, October* 13.

I HAVE paſſed the Summer in one of thoſe places to which a mineral ſpring gives the idle and luxurious an annual reaſon for reſorting, whenever they fancy themſelves offended by the heat of *London*. What is the true motive of this periodical aſſembly, I have never yet been able to diſcover. The greater part of the viſitants neither feel diſeaſes nor fear them. What pleaſure can be expected more than the variety of the journey, I know not, for the numbers are too great for privacy, and too ſmall for diverſion. As each is known to be a ſpy upon the reſt, they all live in continual reſtraint; and having but a narrow range for cenſure, they gratify its cravings by preying on one another.

BUT every condition has ſome advantages. In this confinement, a ſmaller circle affords opportunities for more exact obſervation. The glaſs that magnifies its object contracts the ſight to a point, and the mind muſt be fixed upon a ſingle character to remark its minute peculiarities. The quality or habit which paſſes unobſerved in the tumult of ſucceſſive multitudes, becomes conſpicuous when it is offered to the notice day after day; and perhaps I have, without any diſtinct notice, ſeen thouſands like my late companions; for when the ſcene can be varied at pleaſure, a ſlight diſguſt turns us aſide before a deep impreſſion can be made upon the mind.

THERE was a ſelect ſett, ſuppoſed to be diſtinguiſhed by ſuperiority of intellects, who always paſſed the evening together. To be admitted to their converſation was the higheſt honour of the place; many youths aſpired to diſtinction, by pretending to occaſional invitations; and the Ladies were often wiſhing to be men, that they might partake the pleaſures of learned ſociety.

I KNOW

I KNOW not whether by merit or deſtiny, I was, ſoon after my arrival, admitted to this envied party, which I frequented till I had learned the art by which each endeavoured to ſupport his character.

TOM STEADY was a vehement aſſertor of uncontroverted truth; and by keeping himſelf out of the reach of contradiction, had acquired all the confidence which the conſciouſneſs of irreſiſtible abilities could have given. I was once mentioning a man of eminence, and, after having recounted his virtues, endeavoured to repreſent him fully, by mentioning his faults. *Sir*, ſaid Mr. *Steady*, *that he has faults I can eaſily believe, for who is without them? No man, Sir, is now alive, among the innumerable multitudes that ſwarm upon the earth, however wiſe, or however good, who has not, in ſome degree, his failings and his faults. If there be any man faultleſs, bring him forth into publick view, ſhew him openly, and let him be known; but I will venture to affirm, and, till the contrary be plainly ſhewn, ſhall always maintain, that no ſuch man is to be found. Tell not me, Sir, of impeccability and perfection; ſuch talk is for thoſe that are ſtrangers*

ſtrangers in the world: I have ſeen ſeveral nations, and converſed with all ranks of people; I have known the great and the mean, the learned and the ignorant, the old and the young, the clerical and the lay, but I have never found a man without a fault; and I ſuppoſe ſhall die in the opinion, that to be human is to be frail.

To all this nothing could be oppoſed. I liſtened with a hanging head; Mr. *Steady* looked round on the hearers with triumph, and ſaw every eye congratulating his victory; he departed, and ſpent the next morning in following thoſe who retired from the company, and telling them, with injunctions of ſecrecy, how poor *Spritely* began to take liberties with men wiſer than himſelf; but that he ſuppreſſed him by a deciſive argument, which put him totally to ſilence.

Dick Snug is a man of ſly remark and pithy ſententiouſneſs: he never immerges himſelf in the ſtream of converſation, but lies to catch his companions in the eddy: he is often very ſucceſsful in breaking narratives and confounding eloquence. A Gen-

tleman, giving the hiſtory of one of his acquaintance, made mention of a Lady that had many lovers; *Then*, ſaid Dick, *ſhe was either handſome or rich.* This obſervation being well received, *Dick* watched the progreſs of the tale; and hearing of a man loſt in a ſhipwreck, remarked, that *no man was ever drowned upon dry land.*

WILL STARTLE is a man of exquiſite ſenſibility, whoſe delicacy of frame, and quickneſs of diſcernment, ſubject him to impreſſions from the ſlighteſt cauſes; and who therefore paſſes his life between rapture and horror, in quiverings of delight, or convulſions of diſguſt. His emotions are too violent for many words; his thoughts are always diſcovered by exclamations. *Vile*, *odious*, *horrid*, *deteſtable*, and *ſweet*, *charming*, *delightful*, *aſtoniſhing*, compoſe almoſt his whole vocabulary, which he utters with various contortions and geſticulations, not eaſily related or deſcribed.

JACK SOLID is a man of much reading, who utters nothing but quotations; but

having been, I ſuppoſe, too confident of his memory, he has for ſome time neglected his books, and his ſtock grows every day more ſcanty. Mr. *Solid* has found an opportunity every night to repeat from *Hudibras*,

> Doubtleſs the pleaſure is as great
> Of being cheated, as to cheat.

And from *Waller*,

> Poets loſe half the praiſe they would have got,
> Were it but known that they diſcreetly blot.

DICK MISTY is a man of deep reſearch, and forcible penetration. Others are content with ſuperficial appearances; but *Dick* holds, that there is no effect without a cauſe, and values himſelf upon his power of explaining the difficult, and diſplaying the abſtruſe. Upon a diſpute among us which of two young ſtrangers was more beautiful, *You*, ſays Mr. *Miſty*, turning to me, *like Amaranthia better than Chloris. I do not wonder at the preference, for the cauſe is evident: there is in man a perception of harmony, and a ſenſibility of perfection, which touches the finer fibres of the mental texture*;

ture; and before Reaſon can deſcend from her throne, to paſs her ſentence upon the things compared, drives us towards the object proportioned to our faculties, by an impulſe gentle, yet irreſiſtible; for the Harmonick ſyſtem of the univerſe, and the reciprocal magnetiſm of ſimilar natures, are always operating towards conformity and union; nor can the powers of the ſoul ceaſe from agitation, till they find ſomething on which they can repoſe. To this nothing was oppoſed, and *Amaranthia* was acknowledged to excel *Chloris*.

Of the reſt you may expect an account from,

Sir, Yours,

Robin Spritely.

N° 79. *Saturday, October* 20.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

YOUR acceptance of a former letter on Painting, gives me encouragement to offer a few more ſketches on the ſame ſubject.

AMONGST the Painters, and the writers on Painting, there is one maxim univerſally admitted and continually inculcated. *Imitate Nature* is the invariable rule; but I know none who have explained in what manner this rule is to be underſtood; the conſequence of which is, that every one takes it in the moſt obvious ſenſe, that objects are repreſented naturally when they have ſuch relief that they ſeem real. It may appear ſtrange, perhaps, to hear this ſenſe of the rule diſputed; but it muſt be conſidered, that

that if the excellency of a Painter conſiſted only in this kind of imitation, Painting muſt loſe its rank, and be no longer conſidered as a liberal art, and ſiſter to Poetry, this imitation being merely mechanical, in which the ſloweſt intellect is always ſure to ſucceed beſt; for the Painter of genius cannot ſtoop to drudgery, in which the underſtanding has no part; and what pretence has the art to claim kindred with Poetry, but by its powers over the imagination? To this power the Painter of genius directs him; in this ſenſe he ſtudies Nature, and often arrives at his end, even by being unnatural in the confined ſenſe of the word.

THE grand ſtyle of Painting requires this minute attention to be carefully avoided, and muſt be kept as ſeparate from it as the ſtyle of Poetry from that of Hiſtory. Poetical ornaments deſtroy that air of truth and plainneſs which ought to characterize Hiſtory; but the very being of Poetry conſiſts in departing from this plain narration, and adopting every ornament that will warm

the imagination. To deſire to ſee the excellences of each ſtyle united, to mingle the *Dutch* with the *Italian* School, is to join contrarieties which cannot ſubſiſt together, and which deſtroy the efficacy of each other. The *Italian* attends only to the invariable, the great and general ideas which are fixed and inherent in univerſal Nature; the *Dutch*, on the contrary, to literal truth and a minute exactneſs in the detail, as I may ſay, of Nature modified by accident. The attention to theſe petty peculiarities is the very cauſe of this naturalneſs ſo much admired in the *Dutch* Pictures, which, if we ſuppoſe it to be a beauty, is certainly of a lower order, which ought to give place to a beauty of a ſuperior kind, ſince one cannot be obtained but by departing from the other.

If my opinion was aſked concerning the works of *Michael Angelo*, whether they would receive any advantage from poſſeſſing this mechanical merit, I ſhould not ſcruple to ſay they would not only receive no advantage, but would loſe, in a great meaſure, the

the effect which they now have on every mind ſuſceptible of great and noble ideas. His works may be ſaid to be all genius and ſoul, and why ſhould they be loaded with heavy matter which can only counteract his purpoſe by retarding the progreſs of the imagination.

If this opinion ſhould be thought one of the wild extravagances of Enthuſiaſm, I ſhall only ſay, that thoſe who cenſure it are not converſant in the Works of the great Maſters. It is very difficult to determine the exact degree of enthuſiaſm that the arts of Painting and Poetry may admit. There may perhaps be too great an indulgence as well as too great a reſtraint of imagination; and if the one produces incoherent monſters, the other produces what is full as bad, lifeleſs inſipidity. An intimate knowledge of the paſſions, and good ſenſe, but not common ſenſe, muſt at laſt determine its limits. It has been thought, and I believe with reaſon, that *Michael Angelo* ſometimes tranſgreſſed thoſe limits; and I think I have ſeen figures of him of which it was very diffi-

cult to determine whether they were in the higheſt degree ſublime or extremely ridiculous. Such faults may be ſaid to be the ebullitions of Genius; but at leaſt he had this merit, that he never was inſipid, and whatever paſſion his works may excite, they will always eſcape contempt.

WHAT I have had under conſideration is the ſublimeſt ſtyle, particularly that of *Michael Angelo*, the *Homer* of Painting. Other kinds may admit of this naturalneſs, which of the loweſt kind is the chief merit; but in Painting, as in Poetry, the higheſt ſtyle has the leaſt of common nature.

ONE may very ſafely recommend a little more Enthuſiaſm to the modern Painters; too much is certainly not the vice of the preſent age. The *Italians* ſeem to have been continually declining in this reſpect from the time of *Michael Angelo* to that of *Carlo Maratti*, and from thence to the very bathos of inſipidity to which they are now ſunk; ſo that there is no need of remarking, that where I mentioned the *Italian* Painters in

in oppoſition to the *Dutch*, I mean not the moderns, but the heads of the old *Roman* and *Bolognian* Schools; nor did I mean to include in my idea of an *Italian* Painter, the *Venetian* School, which may be ſaid to be the *Dutch* part of the *Italian* Genius. I have only to add a word of advice to the Painters, that however excellent they may be in painting naturally, they would not flatter themſelves very much upon it; and to the Connoiſſeurs, that when they ſee a cat or a fiddle painted ſo finely, that, as the phraſe is, *It looks as if you could take it up*, they would not for that reaſon immediately compare the Painter to *Raffaelle* and *Michael Angelo*.

N° 80. *Saturday, October 27.*

THAT every day has its pains and ſorrows is univerſally experienced, and almoſt univerſally confeſſed; but let us not attend only to mournful truths; if we look impartially about us, we ſhall find that every day has likewiſe its pleaſures and its joys.

THE time is now come when the town is again beginning to be full, and the ruſticated beauty ſees an end of her baniſhment. Thoſe whom the tyranny of Faſhion had condemned to paſs the ſummer among ſhades and brooks, are now preparing to return to plays, balls, and aſſemblies, with health reſtored by retirement, and ſpirits kindled by expectation.

MANY a mind which has languiſhed ſome months without emotion or deſire, now feels a ſudden renovation of its faculties. It was long ago obſerved by *Pythagoras*, that Ability and Neceſſity dwell near each other. She that

that wandered in the garden without ſenſe of its fragrance, and lay day after day ſtretched upon a couch behind a green curtain, unwilling to wake and unable to ſleep, now ſummons her thoughts to conſider which of her laſt year's cloaths ſhall be ſeen again, and to anticipate the raptures of a new ſuit; the day and the night are now filled with occupation; the laces which were too fine to be worn among ruſticks, are taken from the boxes and reviewed, and the eye is no ſooner cloſed after its labours, than whole ſhops of ſilk buſy the fancy.

BUT happineſs is nothing if it is not known, and very little if it is not envied. Before the day of departure a week is always appropriated to the payment and reception of ceremonial viſits, at which nothing can be mentioned but the delights of *London*. The Lady who is haſtening to the ſcene of action flutters her wings, diſplays her proſpects of felicity, tells how ſhe grudges every moment of delay, and in the preſence of thoſe, whom ſhe knows condemned to ſtay at home, is ſure to wonder by what arts life can be made ſupportable through a winter in the country, and to

tell how often amidſt the extaſies of an Opera ſhe ſhall pity thoſe friends whom ſhe has left behind. Her hope of giving pain is ſeldom diſappointed; the affected indifference of one, the faint congratulations of another, the wiſhes of ſome openly confeſſed, and the ſilent dejection of the reſt, all exalt her opinion of her own ſuperiority.

But however we may labour for our own deception, truth, though unwelcome, will ſometimes intrude upon the mind. They who have already enjoyed the crowds and noiſe of the great city, know that their deſire to return is little more than the reſtleſſneſs of a vacant mind, that they are not ſo much led by hope as driven by diſguſt, and wiſh rather to leave the country than to ſee the town. There is commonly in every coach a paſſenger enwrapped in ſilent expectation, whoſe joy is more ſincere, and whoſe hopes are more exalted. The virgin whom the laſt ſummer releaſed from her governeſs, and who is now going between her mother and her aunt to try the fortune of her wit and beauty, ſuſpects no fallacy in the gay repre-

repreſentation. She believes herſelf paſſing into another world, and images *London* as an Elyſian region, where every hour has its proper pleaſure, where nothing is ſeen but the blaze of wealth, and nothing heard but merriment and flattery; where the morning always riſes on a ſhow, and the evening cloſes on a ball; where the eyes are uſed only to ſparkle, and the feet only to dance.

HER aunt and her mother amuſe themſelves on the road, with telling her of dangers to be dreaded, and cautions to be obſerved. She hears them as they heard their predeceſſors, with incredulity or contempt. She ſees that they have ventured and eſcaped; and one of the pleaſures which ſhe promiſes herſelf is to detect their falſhoods, and be freed from their admonitions.

WE are inclined to believe thoſe whom we do not know, becauſe they never have deceived us. The fair adventurer may perhaps liſten to the *Idler*, whom ſhe cannot ſuſpect of rivalry or malice, yet he ſcarcely expects to be credit-

ed when he tells her, that her expectations will likewiſe end in diſappointment.

THE uniform neceſſities of human nature produce in a great meaſure uniformity of life, and for part of the day make one place like another: to dreſs and to undreſs, to eat and to ſleep, are the ſame in *London* as in the country. The ſupernumerary hours have indeed a greater variety both of pleaſure and of pain. The ſtranger gazed on by multitudes at her firſt appearance in the Park, is perhaps on the higheſt ſummit of female happineſs; but how great is the anguiſh when the novelty of another face draws her worſhipers away! The heart may leap for a time under a fine gown, but the ſight of a gown yet finer puts an end to rapture. In the firſt row at an Opera two hours may be happily paſſed in liſtening to the muſick on the ſtage, and watching the glances of the company; but how will the night end in deſpondency when ſhe that imagined herſelf the ſovereign of the place ſees Lords contending to lead *Iris* to her chair? There is little pleaſure in converſation to her whoſe wit is regarded but in the ſecond place;

place; and who can dance with eaſe or ſpirit that ſees *Amaryllis* led out before her? She that fancied nothing but a ſucceſſion of pleaſures, will find herſelf engaged without deſign in numberleſs competitions, and mortified without provocation with numberleſs afflictions.

But I do not mean to extinguiſh that ardour which I wiſh to moderate, or to diſcourage thoſe whom I am endeavouring to reſtrain. To know the world is neceſſary, ſince we were born for the help of one another; and to know it early is convenient, if it be only that we may learn early to deſpiſe it. She that brings to *London* a mind well prepared for improvement, tho' ſhe miſſes her hope of uninterrupted happineſs, will gain in return an opportunity of adding knowledge to vivacity, and enlarging innocence to virtue.

N°. 81. *Saturday, November* 3.

AS the *Engliſh* army was paſſing towards *Quebec* along a ſoft ſavanna between a mountain and a lake, one of the petty Chiefs of the inland regions ſtood upon a rock ſurrounded by his clan, and from behind the ſhelter of the buſhes contemplated the art and regularity of *European* war. It was evening, the tents were pitched: he obſerved the ſecurity with which the troops reſted in the night, and the order with which the march was renewed in the morning. He continued to purſue them with his eye till they could be ſeen no longer, and then ſtood for ſome time ſilent and penſive.

THEN turning to his followers, "My "children (ſaid he) I have often heard from "men hoary with long life, that there was "a time when our anceſtors were abſolute "lords of the woods, the meadows, and the "lakes,

" lakes, wherever the eye can reach or the " foot can paſs. They fiſhed and hunted, " feaſted and danced, and when they were " weary lay down under the firſt thicket, " without danger and without fear. They " changed their habitations as the ſeaſons re- " quired, convenience prompted, or curioſity " allured them, and ſometimes gathered the " fruits of the mountain, and ſometimes ſport- " ed in canoes along the coaſt.

" MANY years and ages are ſuppoſed to " have been thus paſſed in plenty and ſecu- " rity; when at laſt, a new race of men en- " tered our country from the great Ocean. " They incloſed themſelves in habitations of " ſtone, which our anceſtors could neither " enter by violence, nor deſtroy by fire. They " iſſued from thoſe faſtneſſes, ſometimes co- " vered like the armadillo with ſhells, from " which the lance rebounded on the ſtriker, " and ſometimes carried by mighty beaſts " which had never been ſeen in our vales or " foreſts, of ſuch ſtrength and ſwiftneſs, that " flight and oppoſition were vain alike. Thoſe " invaders ranged over the continent, ſlaugh- " tering in their rage thoſe that reſiſted, and

" thoſe

" thoſe that ſubmitted, in their mirth. Of " thoſe that remained, ſome were buried in " caverns, and condemned to dig metals for " their maſters; ſome were employed in till- " ing the ground, of which foreign tyrants " devour the produce; and when the ſword " and the mines have deſtroyed the natives, " they ſupply their place by human beings of " another colour, brought from ſome diſtant " country to periſh here under toil and tor- " ture.

" SOME there are who boaſt their huma- " nity, and content themſelves to ſeize our " chaces and fiſheries, who drive us from " every track of ground where fertility and " pleaſantneſs invite them to ſettle, and make " no war upon us except when we intrude upon " our own lands.

" OTHERS pretend to have purchaſed a " right of reſidence and tyranny; but ſurely " the inſolence of ſuch bargains is more of- " fenſive than the avowed and open dominion " of force. What reward can induce the " poſſeſſor of a country to admit a ſtranger " more powerful than himſelf? Fraud or ter-

" ror

" ror muſt operate in ſuch contracts; either " they promiſed protection which they never " have afforded, or inſtruction which they " never imparted. We hoped to be ſecured " by their favour from ſome other evil, or to " learn the arts of *Europe*, by which we " might be able to ſecure ourſelves. Their " power they have never exerted in our de- " fence, and their arts they have ſtudiouſly " concealed from us. Their treaties are only " to deceive, and their traffick only to de- " fraud us. They have a written Law among " them, of which they boaſt as derived from " him who made the Earth and Sea, and by " which they profeſs to believe that man will " be made happy when life ſhall forſake him. " Why is not this Law communicated to us? " It is concealed becauſe it is violated. For " how can they preach it to an *Indian* nation, " when I am told that one of its firſt precepts " forbids them to do to others what they would " not that others ſhould do to them?

" But the time perhaps is now approach- " ing when the pride of uſurpation ſhall be " cruſhed, and the cruelties of invaſion ſhall " be revenged. The ſons of Rapacity have

" now

" now drawn their ſwords upon each other,
" and referred their claims to the deciſion of
" war; let us look unconcerned upon the
" ſlaughter, and remember that the death of
" every *European* delivers the country from
" a tyrant and a robber; for what is the
" claim of either nation, but the claim of
" the vulture to the leveret, of the tiger to
" the faun? Let them then continue to diſ-
" pute their title to regions which they can-
" not people, to purchaſe by danger and blood
" the empty dignity of dominion over moun-
" tains which they will never climb, and ri-
" vers which they will never paſs. Let us
" endeavour, in the mean time, to learn their
" diſcipline, and to forge their weapons, and
" when they ſhall be weakened with mutual
" ſlaughter, let us ruſh down upon them,
" force their remains to take ſhelter in their
" ſhips, and reign once more in our native
" country."

N° 82. *Saturday, November* 10.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

DISCOURSING in my laſt letter on the different practice of the *Italian* and *Dutch* Painters, I obſerved that "the *Italian* "Painter attends only to the invariable, the "great and general ideas which are fixed and "inherent in univerſal nature."

I WAS led into the ſubject of this letter by endeavouring to fix the original cauſe of this conduct of the *Italian* Maſters. If it can be proved that by this choice they ſelected the moſt beautiful part of the creation, it will ſhew how much their principles are founded on reaſon, and, at the ſame time, diſcover the origin of our ideas of beauty.

I SUPPOSE it will be eaſily granted, that no man can judge whether any animal be beauti-

beautiful in its kind, or deformed, who has ſeen only one of that ſpecies; that is as concluſive in regard to the human figure; ſo that if a man, born blind, was to recover his ſight, and the moſt beautiful woman was brought before him, he could not determine whether ſhe was handſome or not; nor if the moſt beautiful and moſt deformed were produced, could he any better determine to which he ſhould give the preference, having ſeen only thoſe two. To diſtinguiſh beauty, then, implies the having ſeen many individuals of that ſpecies. If it is aſked, how is more ſkill acquired by the obſervation of greater numbers? I anſwer that, in conſequence of having ſeen many, the power is acquired, even without ſeeking after it, of diſtinguiſhing between accidental blemiſhes and excreſcences which are continually varying the ſurface of Nature's works, and the invariable general form which Nature moſt frequently produces, and always ſeems to intend in her productions.

THUS amongſt the blades of graſs or leaves of the ſame tree, though no two can be found exactly alike, yet the general form is invariable: A Naturaliſt, before he choſe one as a ſample, would

would examine many, ſince if he took the firſt that occurred it might have, by accident or otherwiſe, ſuch a form as that it would ſcarce be known to belong to that ſpecies; he ſelects, as the Painter does, the moſt beautiful, that is, the moſt general form of nature.

EVERY ſpecies of the animal as well as the vegetable creation may be ſaid to have a fixed or determinate form towards which Nature is continually inclining, like various lines terminating in the center; or it may be compared to pendulums vibrating in different directions over one central point; and as they all croſs the center, though only one paſſes through any other point, ſo it will be found that perfect beauty is oftener produced by nature than deformity; I do not mean than deformity in general, but than any one kind of deformity. To inſtance in a particular part of a feature; the line that forms the ridge of the noſe is beautiful when it is ſtrait; this then is the central form, which is oftener found than either concave, convex, or any other irregular form that ſhall be propoſed. As we are then more accuſtomed to beauty than deformity, we may conclude that to be the reaſon why

we approve and admire it, as we approve and admire cuſtoms and faſhions of dreſs for no other reaſon than that we are uſed to them; ſo that though habit and cuſtom cannot be ſaid to be the cauſe of beauty, it is certainly the cauſe of our liking it: And I have no doubt but that if we were more uſed to deformity than beauty, deformity would then loſe the idea now annexed to it, and take that of beauty; as if the whole world ſhould agree, that *yes* and *no* ſhould change their meanings; *yes* would then deny, and *no* would affirm.

WHOEVER undertakes to proceed further in this argument, and endeavours to fix a general criterion of beauty reſpecting different ſpecies, or to ſhew why one ſpecies is more beautiful than another, it will be required from him firſt to prove that one ſpecies is really more beautiful than another. That we prefer one to the other, and with very good reaſon, will be readily granted; but it does not follow from thence that we think it a more beautiful form; for we have no criterion of form by which to determine our judgement. He who ſays a ſwan is more beautiful than a dove, means

means little more than that he has more pleaſure in ſeeing a ſwan than a dove, either from the ſtatelineſs of its motions or its being a more rare bird; and he who gives the preference to the dove, does it from ſome aſſociation of ideas of innocence that he always annexes to the dove; but if he pretends to defend the preference he gives to one or the other by endeavouring to prove that this more beautiful form proceeds from a particular gradation of magnitude, undulation of a curve, or direction of a line, or whatever other conceit of his imagination he ſhall fix on as a criterion of form, he will be continually contradicting himſelf, and find at laſt that the great Mother of Nature will not be ſubjected to ſuch narrow rules. Among the various reaſons why we prefer one part of her works to another, the moſt general, I believe, is habit and cuſtom; cuſtom makes, in a certain ſenſe, white black, and black white; it is cuſtom alone determines our preference of the colour of the *Europeans* to the *Æthiopians*, and they, for the ſame reaſon, prefer their own colour to ours. I ſuppoſe nobody will doubt, if one of their painters was to paint the Goddeſs of

Beauty, but that he would repreſent her black, with thick lips, flat noſe, and woolly hair; and it ſeems to me, he would act very unnaturally if he did not: For by what criterion will any one diſpute the propriety of his idea? We, indeed, ſay, that the form and colour of the *European* is preferable to that of the *Æthiopian*; but I know of no other reaſon we have for it, but that we are more accuſtomed to it. It is abſurd to ſay, that beauty is poſſeſſed of attractive powers, which irreſiſtibly ſeize the correſponding mind with love and admiration, ſince that argument is equally concluſive in favour of the white and the black Philoſopher.

THE black and white nations muſt, in reſpect of beauty, be conſidered as of different kinds, at leaſt a different ſpecies of the ſame kind; from one of which to the other, as I obſerved, no inference can be drawn.

NOVELTY is ſaid to be one of the cauſes of beauty: That novelty is a very ſufficient reaſon why we ſhould admire, is not denied; but becauſe it is uncommon, is it therefore beautiful?

tiful? The beauty that is produced by colour, as when we prefer one bird to another, though of the ſame form, on account of its colour, has nothing to do with this argument, which reaches only to form. I have here conſidered the word Beauty as being properly applied to form alone. There is a neceſſity of fixing this confined ſenſe; for there can be no argument, if the ſenſe of the word is extended to every thing that is approved. A roſe may as well be ſaid to be beautiful, becauſe it has a fine ſmell, as a bird becauſe of its colour. When we apply the word Beauty, we do not mean always by it a more beautiful form, but ſomething valuable on account of its rarity, uſefulneſs, colour, or any other property. A horſe is ſaid to be a beautiful animal; but had a horſe as few good qualities as a tortoiſe, I do not imagine that he would be then eſteemed beautiful.

A FITNESS to the end propoſed, is ſaid to be another cauſe of beauty; but ſuppoſing we were proper judges of what form is the moſt proper in an animal to conſtitute ſtrength or ſwiftneſs, we always determine concerning

its beauty, before we exert our underſtanding to judge of its fitneſs.

FROM what has been ſaid, it may be inferred, that the works of Nature, if we compare one ſpecies with another, are all equally beautiful; and that preference is given from cuſtom, or ſome aſſociation of ideas: And that in creatures of the ſame ſpecies, beauty is the medium or centre of all various forms.

To conclude, then, by way of corollary: if it has been proved, that the Painter, by attending to the invariable and general ideas of Nature, produces beauty, he muſt, by regarding minute particularities and accidental diſcriminations, deviate from the univerſal rule, and pollute his canvas with deformity.

N° 83. *Saturday, November* 17.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

I SUPPOSE you have forgotten that many weeks ago I promiſed to ſend you an account of my companions at the Wells. You would not deny me a place among the moſt faithful votaries of Idleneſs, if you knew how often I have recollected my engagement, and contented myſelf to delay the performance for ſome reaſon which I durſt not examine becauſe I knew it to be falſe; how often I have ſat down to write, and rejoiced at interruption; and how often I have praiſed the dignity of reſolution, determined at night to write in the morning, and referred it in the morning to the quiet hours of night.

I HAVE at laſt begun what I have long wiſhed at an end, and find it more eaſy than I expected to continue my narration.

OUR aſſembly could boaſt no ſuch conſtellation of intellects as *Clarendon*'s band of Aſſociates. We had among us no *Selden*, *Falkland*, or *Waller*; but we had men not leſs important in their own eyes, though leſs diſtinguiſhed by the publick; and many a time have we lamented the partiality of mankind, and agreed that men of the deepeſt enquiry ſometimes let their diſcoveries die away in ſilence, that the moſt comprehenſive obſervers have ſeldom opportunities of imparting their remarks, and that modeſt merit paſſes in the croud unknown and unheeded.

ONE of the greateſt men of the ſociety was SIM SCRUPLE, who lives in a continual equipoiſe of doubt, and is a conſtant enemy to confidence and dogmatiſm. *Sim*'s favourite topic of converſation is the narrowneſs of the human mind, the fallaciouſneſs of our ſenſes, the prevalence of early prejudice, and the uncertainty of appearances. *Sim* has many doubts about the nature of death, and is ſometimes inclined to believe that ſenſation may ſurvive motion, and that a dead man may feel though he cannot ſtir. He has ſometimes hinted that man might perhaps have beeu naturally a quadruped,

druped, and thinks it would be very proper that at the Foundling Hoſpital ſome children ſhould be incloſed in an apartment in which the nurſes ſhould be obliged to walk half upon four and half upon two, that the younglings being bred without the prejudice of exapmle, might have no other guide than Nature, and might at laſt come forth into the world as Genius ſhould direct, erect or prone, on two legs or on four.

THE next in dignity of mien and fluency of talk, was DICK WORMWOOD, whoſe ſole delight is to find every thing wrong. *Dick* never enters a room but he ſhews that the door and the chimney are ill-placed. He never walks into the fields but he finds ground plowed which is fitter for paſture. He is always an enemy to the preſent Faſhion. He holds that all the Beauty and Virtue of women will ſoon be deſtroyed by the uſe of Tea. He triumphs when he talks on the preſent Syſtem of Education, and tells us with great vehemence, that we are learning Words when we ſhould learn Things. He is of opinion that we ſuck in errors at the nurſe's breaſt, and thinks it extremely ridiculous that

children ſhould be taught to uſe the right hand rather than the left.

Bob Sturdy conſiders it as a point of honour to ſay again what he has once ſaid, and wonders how any man that has been known to alter his opinion, can look his neighbours in the face. *Bob* is the moſt formidable diſputant of the whole company; for without troubling himſelf to ſearch for reaſons, he tries his antagoniſt with repeated affirmations. When *Bob* has been attacked for an hour with all the powers of Eloquence and Reaſon, and his poſition appears to all but himſelf utterly untenable, he always cloſes the debate with his firſt declaration, introduced by a ſtout preface of contemptuous civility. "All this is very judicious; you may talk, Sir, as you pleaſe; but I will ſtill ſay what I ſaid at firſt." *Bob* deals much in Univerſals, which he has now obliged us to let paſs without exceptions. He lives on an annuity, and holds that *there are as many Thieves as Traders*; he is of Loyalty unſhaken, and always maintains, that *he who ſees a Jacobite ſees a Raſcal.*

PHIL GENTLE is an enemy to the rudeneſs of contradiction and the turbulence of debate. *Phil* has no notions of his own, and therefore willingly catches from the laſt ſpeaker ſuch as he ſhall drop. This flexibility of ignorance is eaſily accommodated to any tenet; his only difficulty is, when the diſputants grow zealous, how to be of two contrary opinions at once. If no appeal is made to his judgement, he has the art of diſtributing his attention and his ſmiles in ſuch a manner, that each thinks him of his own party; but if he is obliged to ſpeak, he then obſerves, that the queſtion is difficult; that he never received ſo much pleaſure from a debate before; that neither of the controvertiſts could have found his match in any other company; that Mr. *Wormwood's* aſſertion is very well ſupported, and yet there is great force in what Mr. *Scruple* advanced againſt it. By this indefinite declaration both are commonly ſatiſfied; for he that has prevailed is in good humour; and he that has felt his own weakneſs is very glad to have eſcaped ſo well.

I am, Sir, Yours, &c.

ROBIN SPRITELY.

N° 84. *Saturday, November* 24.

BIOGRAPHY is, of the various kinds of narrative writing, that which is moſt eagerly read, and moſt eaſily applied to the purpoſes of life.

In Romances, when the wild field of Poſſibility lies open to invention, the incidents may eaſily be made more numerous, the viciſſitudes more ſudden, and the events more wonderful; but from the time of life when Fancy begins to be over-ruled by Reaſon and corrected by Experience, the moſt artful tale raiſes little curioſity when it is known to be falſe; though it may, perhaps, be ſometimes read as a model of a neat or elegant ſtyle, not for the ſake of knowing what it contains, but how it is written; or thoſe that are weary of themſelves, may have recourſe to it as a pleaſing dream, of which, when they awake, they volun-

voluntarily diſmiſs the images from their minds.

THE examples and events of Hiſtory preſs, indeed, upon the mind with the weight of truth; but when they are repoſited in the memory, they are oftener employed for ſhew than uſe, and rather diverſify converſation than regulate life. Few are engaged in ſuch ſcenes as give them opportunities of growing wiſer by the downfal of Stateſmen or the defeat of Generals. The ſtratagems of War, and the intrigues of Courts, are read by far the greater part of mankind with the ſame indifference as the adventures of fabled Heroes, or the revolutions of a Fairy Region. Between falſehood and uſeleſs truth there is little difference. As gold which he cannot ſpend will make no man rich, ſo knowledge which he cannot apply will make no man wiſe.

THE miſchievous conſequences of vice and folly, of irregular deſires and predominant paſſions, are beſt diſcovered by thoſe relations which are levelled with the general ſurface of life, which tell not how

any man became great, but how he was made happy; not how he loſt the favour of his Prince, but how he became diſcontented with himſelf.

THOSE relations are therefore commonly of moſt value in which the writer tells his own ſtory. He that recounts the life of another, commonly dwells moſt upon conſpicuous events, leſſens the familiarity of his tale to increaſe its dignity, ſhews his favourite at a diſtance decorated and magnified like the ancient actors in their tragick dreſs, and endeavours to hide the man that he may produce a hero.

BUT if it be true, which was ſaid by a *French* Prince, *That no man was a Hero to the ſervants of his chamber*, it is equally true, that every man is yet leſs a Hero to himſelf. He that is moſt elevated above the croud by the importance of his employments, or the reputation of his genius, feels himſelf affected by fame or buſineſs but as they influence his domeſtick life. The high and low, as they have the ſame faculties and

the ſame ſenſes, have no leſs ſimilitude in their pains and pleaſures. The ſenſations are the ſame in all, though produced by very different occaſions. The Prince feels the ſame pain when an invader ſeizes a province, as the Farmer when a thief drives away his cow. Men thus equal in themſelves will appear equal in honeſt and impartial Biography; and thoſe whom Fortune or Nature place at the greateſt diſtance may afford inſtruction to each other.

THE writer of his own life has at leaſt the firſt qualification of an Hiſtorian, the knowledge of the truth; and though it may be plauſibly objected that his temptations to diſguiſe it are equal to his opportunities of knowing it, yet I cannot but think that impartiality may be expected with equal confidence from him that relates the paſſages of his own life, as from him that delivers the tranſactions of another.

CERTAINTY of knowledge not only excludes miſtake, but fortifies veracity. What we collect by conjecture, and by conjecture

ture only can one man judge of another's motives or ſentiments, is eaſily modified by fancy or by deſire; as objects imperfectly diſcerned take forms from the hope or fear of the beholder. But that which is fully known cannot be falſified but with reluctance of underſtanding, and alarm of conſcience: of Underſtanding, the lover of Truth; of Conſcience, the ſentinel of Virtue.

He that writes the Life of another is either his friend or his enemy, and wiſhes either to exalt his praiſe or aggravate his infamy; many temptations to falſehood will occur in the diſguiſe of paſſions, too ſpecious to fear much reſiſtance. Love of Virtue will animate Panegyrick, and hatred of Wickedneſs imbitter Cenſure. The Zeal of Gratitude, the Ardour of Patriotiſm, Fondneſs for an Opinion, or Fidelity to a Party, may eaſily overpower the vigilance of a mind habitually well diſpoſed, and prevail over unaſſiſted and unfriended Veracity.

But he that ſpeaks of himſelf has no motive to Falſhood or Partiality except Self-love, by which all have ſo often been betrayed, that all are on the watch againſt its artifices. He that writes an Apology for a ſingle action, to confute an Accuſation, to recommend himſelf to Favour, is indeed always to be ſuſpected of favouring his own cauſe; but he that ſits down calmly and voluntarily to review his Life for the admonition of Poſterity, or to amuſe himſelf, and leaves this account unpubliſhed, may be commonly preſumed to tell Truth, ſince Falſhood cannot appeaſe his own Mind, and Fame will not be heard beneath the Tomb.

N° 85. *Saturday, December* 1.

ONE of the peculiarites which diſtinguiſh the preſent age is the multiplication of books. Every day brings new advertiſements of literary undertakings, and we are flattered with repeated promiſes of growing wiſe on eaſier terms than our progenitors.

How much either happineſs or knowledge is advanced by this multitude of Authors, it is not very eaſy to decide.

He that teaches us any thing which we knew not before, is undoubtedly to be reverenced as a Maſter. He that conveys knowledge by more pleaſing ways, may very properly be loved as a benefactor; and he that ſupplies life with innocent amuſement, will be certainly careſſed as a pleaſing companion.

But few of thoſe who fill the world with books, have any pretenſions to the hope either of

of pleaſing or inſtructing. They have often no other taſk than to lay two books before them, out of which they compile a third, without any new materials of their own, and with very little application of judgment to thoſe which former Authors have ſupplied.

THAT all compilations are uſeleſs I do not aſſert. Particles of Science are often very widely ſcattered. Writers of extenſive comprehenſion have incidental remarks upon topicks very remote from the principal ſubject, which are often more valuable than formal treatiſes, and which yet are not known becauſe they are not promiſed in the title. He that collects thoſe under proper heads is very laudably employed, for though he exerts no great abilities in the work, he facilitates the progreſs of others, and by making that eaſy of attainment which is already written, may give ſome mind, more vigorous or more adventurous than his own, leiſure for new thoughts and original deſigns.

BUT the collections poured lately from the preſs have been ſeldom made at any great expence of time or inquiry, and therefore only

ſerve

ſerve to diſtract choice without ſupplying any real want.

It is obſerved that *a corrupt Society has many laws*; I know not whether it is not equally true, that *an ignorant Age has many Books*. When the treaſures of ancient knowledge lye unexamined, and original Authors are neglected and forgotten, Compilers and Plagiaries are encouraged, who give us again what we had before, and grow great by ſetting before us what our own ſloth had hidden from our view.

Yet are not even theſe Writers to be indiſcriminately cenſured and rejected. Truth like Beauty varies its faſhions, and is beſt recommended by different dreſſes to different minds; and he that recalls the attention of mankind to any part of learning which time has left behind it, may be truly ſaid to advance the literature of his own age. As the manners of nations vary, new topicks of perſuaſion become neceſſary, and new combinations of imagery are produced; and he that can accommodate himſelf to the reigning taſte, may always have

have readers who perhaps would not have looked upon better performances.

To exact of every man who writes that he ſhould ſay ſomething new, would be to reduce Authors to a ſmall number; to oblige the moſt fertile Genius to ſay only what is new, would be to contract his volumes to a few pages. Yet, ſurely, there ought to be ſome bounds to repetition; libraries ought no more to be heaped for ever with the ſame thoughts differently expreſſed, than with the ſame books differently decorated.

THE good or evil which theſe ſecondary Writers produce is ſeldom of any long duration. As they owe their exiſtence to change of faſhion, they commonly diſappear when a new faſhion becomes prevalent. The Authors that in any nation laſt from age to age are very few, becauſe there are very few that have any other claim to notice than that they catch hold on preſent curioſity, and gratify ſome accidental deſire, or produce ſome temporary conveniency.

BUT however the Writers of the Day may deſpair of future Fame, they ought at leaſt to

to forbear any preſent miſchief. Though they cannot arrive at eminent heights of excellence, they might keep themſelves harmleſs. They might take care to inform themſelves before they attempt to inform others, and exert the little influence which they have for honeſt purpoſes.

BUT ſuch is the preſent ſtate of our literature, that the ancient Sage, who thought *a great Book a great Evil*, would now think the multitude of Books a multitude of Evils. He would conſider a bulky Writer who engroſſed a year, and a ſwarm of Pamphleteers who ſtole each an hour, as equal waſters of human life, and would make no other difference between them, than between a Beaſt of Prey, and a Flight of Locuſts.

N° 86. *Saturday, December* 8.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

I AM a young Lady newly married to a young Gentleman. Our Fortune is large, our Minds are vacant, our Diſpoſitions gay, our Acquaintances numerous, and our Relations ſplendid. We conſidered that Marriage, like Life, has its Youth, that the firſt year is the year of Gaiety and Revel, and reſolved to ſee the Shews and feel the Joys of *London* before the increaſe of our family ſhould confine us to domeſtick Cares and domeſtick Pleaſures.

LITTLE time was ſpent in preparation; the coach was harneſſed, and a few days brought us to *London*, and we alighted at a lodging provided for us by Miſs *Biddy Trifle*,

Trifle, a maiden niece of my huſband's father, where we found Apartments on a ſecond floor, which my couſin told us would ſerve us till we could pleaſe ourſelves with a more commodious and elegant habitation, and which ſhe had taken at a very high price, becauſe it was not worth the while to make a hard bargain for ſo ſhort a time.

HERE I intended to lie concealed till my new cloaths were made, and my new lodging hired; but Miſs *Trifle* had ſo induſtriouſly given notice of our arrival to all her acquaintance, that I had the mortification next day of ſeeing the door thronged with painted coaches and chairs with Coronets, and was obliged to receive all my huſband's relations on a ſecond floor.

INCONVENIENCES are often balanced by ſome advantage: the Elevation of my Apartments furniſhed a ſubject for converſation, which, without ſome ſuch help, we ſhould have been in danger of wanting. Lady *Stately* told us how many years had paſſed ſince ſhe climbed ſo many ſteps. Miſs

Airy ran to the window, and thought it charming to ſee the walkers ſo little in the ſtreet; and Miſs *Gentle* went to try the ſame experiment, and ſcreamed to find herſelf ſo far above the ground.

THEY all knew that we intended to remove, and therefore all gave me advice about a proper choice. One ſtreet was recommended for the purity of its air, another for its freedom from noiſe, another for its nearneſs to the Park, another becauſe there was but a ſtep from it to all places of Diverſion, and another, becauſe its inhabitants enjoyed at once the town and country.

I HAD civility enough to hear every recommendation with a look of Curioſity while it was made, and of Acquieſcence when it was concluded, but in my heart felt no other deſire than to be free from the diſgrace of a ſecond floor, and cared little where I ſhould fix, if the Apartments were ſpacious and ſplendid.

NEXT day a chariot was hired, and Miſs *Trifle* was diſpatched to find a lodging. She returned in the afternoon, with an account of a charming place, to which my huſband went in the morning to make the contract. Being young and unexperienced, he took with him his friend *Ned Quick*, a gentleman of great ſkill in rooms and furniture, who ſees, at a ſingle glance, whatever there is to be commended or cenſured. Mr. *Quick*, at the firſt view of the houſe, declared that it could not be inhabited, for the Sun in the afternoon ſhone with full glare on the windows of the dining-room.

MISS *Trifle* went out again, and ſoon diſcovered another lodging, which Mr. *Quick* went to ſurvey, and found, that, whenever the wind ſhould blow from the Eaſt, all the ſmoke of the city would be driven upon it.

A MAGNIFICENT ſett of rooms was then found in one of the ſtreets near *Weſtminſter-Bridge*, which Miſs *Trifle* preferred to any which ſhe had yet ſeen; but Mr. *Quick*, having muſed upon it for a time, concluded that it

it would be too much expoſed in the morning to the fogs that riſe from the River.

THUS Mr. *Quick* proceeded to give us every day new teſtimonies of his taſte and circumſpection; ſometimes the ſtreet was too narrow for a double range of Coaches; ſometimes it was an obſcure place, not inhabited by Perſons of Quality. Some places were dirty, and ſome crowded; in ſome houſes the furniture was ill ſuited, and in others the ſtairs were too narrow. He had ſuch fertility of objections that Miſs *Trifle* was at laſt tried, and deſiſted from all attempts for our accommodation.

IN the mean time I have ſtill continued to ſee my company on a ſecond floor, and am aſked twenty times a day when I am to leave thoſe odious lodgings, in which I live tumultuouſly without pleaſure, and expenſively without honour. My huſband thinks ſo highly of Mr. *Quick*, that he cannot be perſuaded to remove without his approbation; and Mr. *Quick* thinks his reputation raiſed by the multiplication of difficulties.

In this diſtreſs to whom can I have recourſe? I find my temper vitiated by daily diſappointment, by the ſight of Pleaſures which I cannot partake, and the poſſeſſion of Riches which I cannot enjoy. Dear Mr. *Idler*, inform my huſband that he is trifling away, in ſuperfluous vexation, the few months which Cuſtom has appropriated to Delight; that matrimonial quarrels are not eaſily reconciled between thoſe that have no children; that wherever we ſettle he muſt always find ſome inconvenience; but nothing is ſo much to be avoided as a perpetual ſtate of Enquiry and Suſpence.

I am, Sir,

Your humble ſervant,

PEGGY HEARTLESS.

N° 87. *Saturday, December* 15.

OF what we know not we can only judge by what we know. Every novelty appears more wonderful as it is more remote from any thing with which experience or teſtimony have hitherto acquainted us, and if it paſſes further beyond the notions that we have been accuſtomed to form, it becomes at laſt incredible.

WE ſeldom conſider that human knowledge is very narrow, that national manners are formed by chance, that uncommon conjunctures of cauſes produce rare effects, or that what is impoſſible at one time or place may yet happen in another. It is always eaſier to deny than to enquire. To refuſe credit confers for a moment an appearance of ſuperiority, which every little mind is tempted to aſſume when it may be gained ſo

cheaply as by withdrawing attention from evidence, and declining the fatigue of comparing probabilities. The moſt pertinacious and vehement demonſtrator may be wearied in time by continual negation; and Incredulity, which an old Poet, in his Addreſs to *Raleigh*, calls *the Wit of Fools*, obtunds the argument which it cannot anſwer, as woolſacks deaden arrows though they cannot repel them.

MANY Relations of travellers have been ſlighted as fabulous, till more frequent Voyages have confirmed their veracity; and it may reaſonably be imagined, that many ancient Hiſtorians are unjuſtly ſuſpected of falſhood, becauſe our own times afford nothing that reſembles what they tell.

HAD only the Writers of Antiquity informed us that there was once a nation in which the wife lay down upon the burning pile only to mix her aſhes with thoſe of her huſband, we ſhould have thought it a tale to be told with that of *Endymion*'s Commerce with the Moon. Had only a ſingle Traveller related that many nations of the

earth were black, we ſhould have thought the accounts of *Negroes* and of the *Phœnix* equally credible. But of black men the numbers are too great who are now repining under *Engliſh* cruelty, and the cuſtom of voluntary cremation is not yet loſt among the Ladies of *India*.

FEW narratives will either to men or women appear more incredible than the hiſtories of the *Amazons*; of female nations of whoſe conſtitution it was the eſſential and fundamental law, to exclude men from all participation either of publick affairs or domeſtick buſineſs; where female armies marched under female captains, female farmers gathered the harveſt, female partners danced together, and female wits diverted one another.

YET ſeveral ages of antiquity have tranſmitted accounts of the *Amazons* of *Caucaſus*; and of the *Amazons* of *America*, who have given their name to the greateſt River in the world. *Condamine* lately found ſuch memorials as can be expected among erra-

tick and unlettered nations, where events are recorded only by tradition, and new ſwarms ſettling in the country from time to time, confuſe and efface all traces of former times.

To die with huſbands, or to live without them, are the two extremes which the Prudence and Moderation of *European* Ladies have, in all ages, equally declined; they have never been allured to death by the kindneſs or civility of the politeſt nations, nor has the roughneſs and brutality of more ſavage countries ever provoked them to doom their male aſſociates to irrevocable baniſhment. The *Bohemian* matrons are ſaid to have made one ſhort ſtruggle for ſuperiority, but inſtead of baniſhing the men they contented themſelves with condemning them to ſervile offices; and their conſtitution, thus left imperfect, was quickly overthrown.

THERE is, I think, no claſs of *Engliſh* women from whom we are in any danger of *Amazonian* uſurpation. The old Maids ſeem neareſt to independence, and moſt likely

ly to be animated by revenge againſt maſculine authority; they often ſpeak of men with acrimonious vehemence, but it is ſeldom found that they have any ſettled hatred againſt them, and it is yet more rarely obſerved that they have any kindneſs for each other. They will not eaſily combine in any plot; and if they ſhould ever agree to retire and fortify themſelves in caſtles or in mountains, the ſentinel will betray the paſſes in ſpite, and the garriſon will capitulate upon eaſy terms, if the beſiegers have handſome ſword-knots, and are well ſupplied with fringe and lace.

THE Gameſters, if they were united, would make a formidable body; and ſince they conſider men only as beings that are to loſe their money, they might live together without any wiſh for the Officiouſneſs of Gallantry or the Delights of diverſified Converſation. But as nothing would hold them together but the hope of plundering one another, their government would fail from the defect of its principles, the men would need only to neglect them, and they

would periſh in a few weeks by a civil war.

I DO not mean to cenſure the Ladies of *England* as defective in knowledge or in ſpirit, when I ſuppoſe them unlikely to revive the military honours of their ſex. The character of the ancient *Amazons* was rather terrible than lovely; the hand could not be very delicate that was only employed in drawing the bow and brandiſhing the battle-axe; their power was maintained by cruelty, their courage was deformed by ferocity, and their example only ſhews that men and women live beſt together.

N° 88. *Saturday, December 22.*

WHEN the Philoſophers of the laſt Age were firſt congregated into the Royal Society, great expectations were raiſed of the ſudden progreſs of uſeful Arts; the time was ſuppoſed to be near when Engines ſhould turn by a perpetual motion, and Health be ſecured by the univerſal Medicine; when Learning ſhould be facilitated by a real Character, and Commerce extended by ſhips which could reach their Ports in defiance of the Tempeſt.

BUT Improvement is naturally ſlow. The Society met and parted without any viſible diminution of the miſeries of life. The Gout and Stone were ſtill painful, the Ground that was not plowed brought no Harveſt, and neither Oranges nor Grapes would grow upon the Hawthorn. At laſt, thoſe who

were diſappointed began to be angry; thoſe likewiſe who hated innovation were glad to gain an opportunity of ridiculing men who had depreciated, perhaps with too much arrogance, the Knowledge of Antiquity. And it appears from ſome of their earlieſt Apologies, that the Philoſophers felt with great ſenſibility the unwelcome importunities of thoſe who were daily aſking, "What have "ye done?"

THE truth is, that little had been done compared with what Fame had been ſuffered to promiſe; and the queſtion could only be anſwered by general apologies and by new hopes, which, when they were fruſtrated, gave a new occaſion to the ſame vexatious enquiry.

THIS fatal queſtion has diſturbed the quiet of many other minds. He that in the latter part of his life too ſtrictly enquires what he has done, can very ſeldom receive from his own heart ſuch an account as will give him ſatisfaction.

WE

We do not indeed ſo often diſappoint others as ourſelves. We not only think more highly than others of our own abilities, but allow ourſelves to form hopes which we never communicate, and pleaſe our thoughts with employments which none ever will allot us, and with elevations to which we are never expected to riſe; and when our days and years have paſſed away in common buſineſs or common amuſements, and we find at laſt that we have ſuffered our purpoſes to ſleep till the time of action is paſt, we are reproached only by our own reflections; neither our friends nor our enemies wonder that we live and die like the reſt of mankind; thar we live without notice, and die without memorial; they know not what taſk we had propoſed, and therefore cannot diſcern whether it is finiſhed.

He that compares what he has done with what he has left undone, will feel the effect which muſt always follow the compariſon of imagination with reality; he will look with contempt on his own unimportance, and wonder to what purpoſe he came into the world; he will repine that he ſhall leave behind him

no evidence of his having been, that he has added nothing to the ſyſtem of life, but has glided from Youth to Age among the crowd, without any effort for diſtinction.

MAN is ſeldom willing to let fall the opinion of his own dignity, or to believe that he does little only becauſe every individual is a very little being. He is better content to want Diligence than Power, and ſooner confeſſes the Depravity of his Will than the Imbecillity of his Nature.

FROM this miſtaken notion of human Greatneſs it proceeds, that many who pretend to have made great Advances in Wiſdom ſo loudly declare that they deſpiſe themſelves. If I had ever found any of the Self-contemners much irritated or pained by the conſciouſneſs of their meanneſs, I ſhould have given them conſolation by obſerving, that a little more than nothing is as much as can be expected from a being who with reſpect to the multitudes about him is himſelf little more than nothing. Every man is obliged by the ſupreme Maſter of the Univerſe

to

to improve all the opportunities of Good which are afforded him, and to keep in continual activity ſuch Abilities as are beſtowed upon him. But he has no reaſon to repine, though his Abilities are ſmall and his Opportunities few. He that has improved the Virtue or advanced the Happineſs of one Fellow-creature, he that has aſcertained a ſingle moral Propoſition, or added one uſeful Experiment to natural Knowledge, may be contented with his own Performance, and, with reſpect to mortals like himſelf, may demand, like *Auguſtus*, to be diſmiſſed at his departure with Applauſe.

N° 89. *Saturday, December* 29.

Ἀνέχου καὶ ἀπέχου. EPICT.

HOW Evil came into the world; for what reaſon it is that Life is overſpread with ſuch boundleſs varieties of miſery; why the only thinking being of this globe is doomed to think merely to be wretched, and to paſs his time from youth to age in fearing or in ſuffering calamities, is a queſtion which Philoſophers have long aſked, and which Philoſophy could never anſwer.

RELIGION informs us that Miſery and Sin were produced together. The depravation of human will was followed by a diſorder of the harmony of Nature; and by that Providence which often places antidotes in the neighbourhood of poiſons, vice was checked by miſery, leſt it ſhould ſwell to univerſal and unlimited dominion.

A STATE

A STATE of Innocence and Happineſs is ſo remote from all that we have ever ſeen, that though we can eaſily conceive it poſſible, and may therefore hope to attain it, yet our ſpeculations upon it muſt be general and confuſed. We can diſcover that where there is univerſal Innocence, there will probably be univerſal Happineſs; for why ſhould Afflictions be permitted to infeſt beings who are not in danger of corruption from Bleſſings, and where there is no uſe of Terrour nor cauſe of Puniſhment? But in a world like ours, where our Senſes aſſault us, and our Hearts betray us, we ſhould paſs on from crime to crime, heedleſs and remorſeleſs, if Miſery did not ſtand in our way, and our own Pains admoniſh us of our folly.

ALMOST all the moral Good which is left among us, is the apparent effect of phyſical Evil.

GOODNESS is divided by Divines into Soberneſs, Righteouſneſs, and Godlineſs. Let it be examined how each of theſe Duties would be practiſed if there were no phyſical Evil to enforce it.

SOBRIETY,

SOBRIETY, or Temperance, is nothing but the forbearance of Pleaſure; and if Pleaſure was not followed by Pain, who would forbear it? We ſee every hour thoſe in whom the deſire of preſent indulgence overpowers all ſenſe of paſt and all foreſight of future miſery. In a remiſſion of the Gout the Drunkard returns to his Wine, and the Glutton to his Feaſt; and if neither Diſeaſe nor Poverty were felt or dreaded, every one would ſink down in idle ſenſuality, without any care of others, or of himſelf. To eat and drink, and lie down to ſleep, would be the whole buſineſs of mankind.

RIGHTEOUSNESS, or the ſyſtem of ſocial Duty, may be ſubdivided into Juſtice and Charity. Of Juſtice one of the heathen Sages has ſhewn, with great acuteneſs, that it was impreſſed upon mankind only by the inconveniences which Injuſtice had produced. "In the firſt ages, ſays he, men acted without any rule but the impulſe of Deſire, "they practiſed Injuſtice upon others, and "ſuffered it from others in their turn; but "in time it was diſcovered, that the pain of "ſuffer-

" ſuffering wrong was greater than the plea-
" ſure of doing it; and mankind, by a ge-
" neral compact, ſubmitted to the reſtraint
" of laws, and reſigned the pleaſure to eſcape
" the pain."

Of Charity it is ſuperfluous to obſerve, that it could have no place if there were no want, for of a virtue which could not be practiſed, the omiſſion could not be culpable. Evil is not only the occaſional but the efficient cauſe of charity; we are incited to the relief of miſery by the conſciouſneſs that we have the ſame nature with the ſufferer, that we are in danger of the ſame diſtreſſes, and may ſometime implore the ſame aſſiſtance.

Godliness, or Piety, is elevation of the mind towards the Supreme Being, and extenſion of the thoughts of another life. The other life is future, and the Supreme Being is inviſible. None would have recourſe to an inviſible power, but that all other ſubjects had eluded their hopes. None would fix their attention upon the future, but that they are diſcontented with the preſent. If the ſenſes were feaſted with perpetual

petual Pleaſure, they would always keep the mind in ſubjection. Reaſon has no authority over us, but by its power to warn us againſt Evil.

In Childhood, while our minds are yet unoccupied, Religion is impreſſed upon them, and the firſt years of almoſt all who have been well educated are paſſed in a regular diſcharge of the duties of Piety. But as we advance forward into the crouds of life, innumerable delights ſollicit our inclinations, and innumerable cares diſtract our attention; the time of youth is paſſed in noiſy frolicks; Manhood is led on from hope to hope, and from project to project; the diſſoluteneſs of pleaſure, the inebriation of ſucceſs, the ardour of expectation, and the vehemence of competition, chain down the mind alike to the preſent ſcene, nor is it remembered how ſoon this miſt of trifles muſt be ſcattered, and the bubbles that float upon the rivulet of life be loſt for ever in the gulph of eternity. To this conſideration ſcarce any man is awakened but by ſome preſſing and reſiſtleſs evil. The death of thoſe from whom he derived his pleaſures, or to whom he deſtined

ſtined his poſſeſſions, ſome diſeaſe which ſhews him the vanity of all external acquiſitions, or the gloom of age, which intercepts his proſpects of long enjoyment, forces him to fix his hopes upon another ſtate, and when he has contended with the tempeſts of life till his ſtrength fails him, he flies at laſt to the ſhelter of religion.

THAT miſery does not make all virtuous, experience too certainly informs us; but it is no leſs certain that of what Virtue there is, Miſery produces far the greater part. Phyſical Evil may be therefore endured with patience, ſince it is the cauſe of moral Good; and Patience itſelf is one Virtue by which we are prepared for that ſtate in which Evil ſhall be no more.

N° 90. *Saturday, January* 5, 1760.

IT is a complaint which has been made from time to time, and which ſeems to have lately become more frequent, that *Engliſh* Oratory, however forcible in argument, or elegant in expreſſion, is deficient and inefficacious, becauſe our ſpeakers want the Grace and Energy of Action.

AMONG the numerous Projectors who are deſirous to refine our manners, and improve our Faculties, ſome are willing to ſupply the deficiency of our Speakers. We have had more than one exhortation to ſtudy the neglected Art of moving the paſſions, and have been encouraged to believe that our tongues, however feeble in themſelves, may, by the help of our hands and legs, obtain an uncontroulable dominion over the moſt ſtubborn audience, animate the inſenſible, engage the careleſs, force tears from the obdurate, and money from the avaricious.

IF

If by ſlight of hand, or nimbleneſs of foot, all theſe wonders can be performed, he that ſhall neglect to attain the free uſe of his limbs may be juſtly cenſured as criminally lazy. But I am afraid that no ſpecimen of ſuch effects will eaſily be ſhewn. If I could once find a ſpeaker in *Change-Alley* raiſing the price of ſtocks by the power of perſuaſive geſtures, I ſhould very zealouſly recommend the ſtudy of his art; but having never ſeen any action by which language was much aſſiſted, I have been hitherto inclined to doubt whether my countrymen are not blamed too haſtily for their calm and motionleſs utterance.

Foreigners of many nations accompany their ſpeech with action; but why ſhould their example have more influence upon us than ours upon them? Cuſtoms are not to be changed but for better. Let thoſe who deſire to reform us ſhew the benefits of the change propoſed. When the *Frenchman* waves his hands and writhes his body in recounting the revolutions of a game at cards, or the *Neapolitan*, who tells the hour of the day, ſhews upon his fingers the number which he mentions, I do not perceive that their manual exerciſe

ercise is of much use, or that they leave any image more deeply impressed by their bustle and vehemence of communication.

Upon the *English* Stage there is no want of Action; but the difficulty of making it at once various and proper, and its perpetual tendency to become ridiculous, notwithstanding all the advantages which art and show, and custom and prejudice, can give it, may prove how little it can be admitted into any other place, where it can have no recommendation but from Truth and Nature.

The use of *English* Oratory is only at the Bar, in the Parliament, and in the Church. Neither the Judges of our Laws nor the Representatives of our People would be much affected by laboured gesticulation, or believe any man the more because he rolled his eyes, or puffed his cheeks, or spread abroad his arms, or stamped the ground, or thumped his breast, or turned his eyes sometimes to the cieling and sometimes to the floor. Upon men intent only upon truth, the arm of an Orator has little power; a credible testimony, or a cogent argument, will overcome all the art

art of modulation, and all the violence of contortion.

It is well known that in the City which may be called the Parent of Oratory, all the arts of mechanical perſuaſion were baniſhed from the court of ſupreme Judicature. The Judges of the *Areopagus* conſidered action and vociferation as a fooliſh appeal to the external ſenſes, and unworthy to be practiſed before thoſe who had no deſire of idle amuſement, and whoſe only pleaſure was to diſcover right.

Whether Action may not be yet of uſe in churches, where the Preacher addreſſes a mingled audience, may deſerve enquiry. It is certain that the ſenſes are more powerful as the reaſon is weaker; and that he whoſe ears convey little to his mind, may ſometimes liſten with his eyes till truth may gradually take poſſeſſion of his heart. If there be any uſe of geſticulation, it muſt be applied to the ignorant and rude, who will be more affected by vehemence than delighted by propriety. In the pulpit little action can be proper, for action can illuſtrate nothing but that to

which it may be referred by nature or by cuſtom. He that imitates by his hand a motion which he deſcribes, explains it by natural ſimilitude; he that lays his hand on his breaſt, when he expreſſes pity, enforces his words by a cuſtomary illuſion. But Theology has few topicks to which action can be appropriatde; that action which is vague and indeterminate will at laſt ſettle into habit, and habitual peculiarities are quickly ridiculous.

It is perhaps the character of the *Engliſh* to deſpiſe trifles; and that art may ſurely be accounted a trifle which is at once uſeleſs and oſtentatious, which can ſeldom be practiſed with propriety, and which as the mind is more cultivated, is leſs powerful. Yet as all innocent means are to be uſed for the propagation of truth, I would not deter thoſe who are employed in preaching to common congregations from any practice which they may find perſuaſive; for, compared with the converſion of ſinners, propriety and elegance are leſs than nothing.

N° 91. *Saturday, January* 12.

IT is common to overlook what is near, by keeping the eye fixed upon ſomething remote. In the ſame manner preſent opportunities are neglected, and attainable good is ſlighted, by minds buſied in extenſive ranges, and intent upon future advantages. Life, however ſhort, it made ſtill ſhorter by waſte of time, and its progreſs towards happineſs, though naturally ſlow, is yet retarded by unneceſſary labour.

THE difficulty of obtaining knowledge is univerſally confeſſed. To fix deeply in the mind the principles of ſcience, to ſettle their limitations, and deduce the long ſucceſſion of their conſequences; to comprehend the whole compaſs of complicated ſyſtems, with all the arguments, objections, and ſolutions, and to repoſite in the intellectual treaſury the numberleſs facts, experiments, apophthegms, and

poſitions, which muſt ſtand ſingle in the memory, and of which none has any perceptible connection with the reſt, is a taſk which, though undertaken with ardor and purſued with diligence, muſt at laſt be left unfiniſhed by the frailty of our nature.

To make the way to learning either leſs ſhort or leſs ſmooth is certainly abſurd; yet this is the apparent effect of the prejudice which ſeems to prevail among us in favour of foreign authors, and of the contempt of our native literature, which this excurſive curioſity muſt neceſſarily produce. Every man is more ſpeedily inſtructed by his own language, than by any other; before we ſearch the reſt of the world for teachers, let us try whether we may not ſpare our trouble by finding them at home.

THE riches of the *Engliſh* language are much greater than they are commonly ſuppoſed. Many uſeful and valuable books lie buried in ſhops and libraries, unknown and unexamined, unleſs ſome lucky compiler opens them by chance, and finds an eaſy ſpoil of wit and learning. I am far from intending to

to inſinuate, that other languages are not neceſſary to him who aſpires to eminence, and whoſe whole life is devoted to ſtudy; but to him who reads only for amuſement, or whoſe purpoſe is not to deck himſelf with the honours of literature, but to be qualified for domeſtick uſefulneſs, and ſit down content with ſubordinate reputation, we have authors ſufficient to fill up all the vacancies of his time, and gratify moſt of his wiſhes for information.

Of our Poets I need ſay little, becauſe they are perhaps the only authors to whom their country has done juſtice. We conſider the whole ſucceſſion from *Spenſer* to *Pope*, as ſuperior to any names which the continent can boaſt; and therefore the poets of other nations, however familiarly they may be ſometimes mentioned, are very little read except by thoſe who deſign to borrow their beauties.

There is, I think, not one of the liberal arts which may not be competently learned in the *Engliſh* language. He that ſearches after mathematical knowledge may buſy himſelf among his own countrymen, and will find

one or other able to inſtruct him in every part of thoſe abſtruſe ſciences. He that is delighted with experiments, and wiſhes to know the nature of bodies from certain and viſible effects, is happily placed where the mechanical philoſophy was firſt eſtabliſhed by a publick inſtitution, and from which it was ſpread to all other countries.

The more airy and elegant ſtudies of Philology and Criticiſm have little need of any foreign help. Though our language, not being very analogical, gives few opportunities for grammatical reſearches, yet we have not wanted authors who have conſidered the principles of ſpeech; and with critical writings we abound ſufficiently to enable Pedantry to impoſe rules which can ſeldom be obſerved, and Vanity to talk of books which are ſeldom read.

But our own language has, from the Reformation to the preſent time, been chiefly dignified and adorned by the works of our Divines, who, conſidered as commentators, controvertiſts, or preachers, have undoubtedly left all other nations far behind them. No vulgar language

language can boaſt ſuch treaſures of theological knowledge, or ſuch multitudes of authors at once learned, elegant, and pious. Other countries and other communions have authors perhaps equal in abilities and diligence to ours; but if we unite number with excellence there is certainly no nation which muſt not allow us to be ſuperior. Of Morality little is neceſſary to be ſaid becauſe it is comprehended in practical divinity, and is perhaps better taught in Engliſh ſermons than in any other books ancient or modern. Nor ſhall I dwell on our excellence is metaphyſical ſpeculations, becauſe he that reads the works of our divines will eaſily diſcover how far human ſubtilty has been able to penetrate.

POLITICAL knowledge is forced upon us by the form of our conſtitution. and all the myſteries of government are diſcovered in the attack or defence of every miniſter. The original law of ſociety, the rights of ſubjects, and the prerogatives of kings, have been conſidered with the utmoſt nicety, ſometimes profoundly inveſtigated, and ſometimes ſamiliarly explained.

THUS copiouſly inſtructive is the *Engliſh* language, and thus needleſs is all recourſe to foreign writers. Let us not therefore make our neighbours proud by ſoliciting help which we do not want, nor diſcourage our own induſtry by difficulties which we need not ſuffer.

N° 92. *Saturday, January* 19.

WHATEVER is uſeful or honourable will be deſired by many who never can obtain it, and that which cannot be obtained when it is deſired, artifice or folly will be diligent to counterfeit. Thoſe to whom fortune has denied gold and diamonds decorate themſelves with ſtones and metals, which have ſomething of the ſhow but little of the value; and every moral excellence or intellectual faculty has ſome vice or folly which imitates its appearance.

EVERY man wiſhes to be wiſe, and they who cannot be wiſe are almoſt always cunning. The leſs is the real diſcernment of thoſe

thoſe whom buſineſs or converſation brings together, the more illuſions are practiſed, nor is caution ever ſo neceſſary as with aſſociates or opponents of feeble minds.

CUNNING differs from wiſdom as twilight from open day. He that walks in the ſunſhine goes boldly foward by the neareſt way; he ſees that where the path is ſtreight and even he may proceed in ſecurity, and where it is rough and crooked he eaſily complies with the turns and avoids the obſtructions. But the traveller in the duſk fears more as he ſees leſs; he knows there may be danger, and therefore ſuſpects that he is never ſafe, tries every ſtep before he fixes his foot, and ſhrinks at every noiſe leſt violence ſhould approach him. Wiſdom comprehends at once the end and the means, eſtimates eaſineſs or difficulty, and is cautious or confident in due proportion. Cunning diſcovers little at a time, and has no other means of certainty than multiplication of ſtratagems and ſuperfluity of ſuſpicion. The man of Cunning always conſiders that he can never be too ſafe, and therefore always keeps himſelf enveloped in

a miſt, impenetrable, as he hopes, to the eye of rivalry or curioſity.

UPON this principle, TOM DOUBLE has formed a habit of eluding the moſt harmleſs queſtion. What he has no inclination to anſwer, he pretends ſometimes not to hear, and endeavours to divert the enquirer's attention by ſome other ſubject; but if he be preſſed hard by repeated interrogation, he always evades a direct reply. Aſk him whom he likes beſt on the ſtage? he is ready to tell that there are ſeveral excellent performers. Enquire when he was laſt at the coffee-houſe, he replies, that the weather has been bad lately. Deſire him to tell the age of any of his acquaintance, he immediately mentions another who is older or younger.

WILL PUZZLE values himſelf upon a long reach. He foreſees every thing before it will happen, though he never relates his prognoſtications till the event is paſt. Nothing has come to paſs for theſe twenty years of which Mr. *Puzzle* had not given broad hints,

hints, and told at leaſt that it was not proper to tell. Of thoſe predictions, which every concluſion will equally verify, he always claims the credit, and wonders that his friends did not underſtand them. He ſuppoſes very truly that much may be known which he knows not, and therefore pretends to know much of which he and all mankind are equally ignorant. I deſired his opinion yeſterday of the *German* war, and was told that if the *Pruſſians* were well ſupported, ſomething great may be expected; but that they have very powerful enemies to encounter, that the *Auſtrian* general has long experience, and the *Ruſſians* are hardy and reſolute; but that no human power is invincible. I then drew the converſation to our own affairs, and invited him to balance the probabilities of war and peace; he told me that war requires courage, and negotiation judgment, and that the time will come when it will be ſeen whether our ſkill in treaty is equal to our bravery in battle. To this general prattle he will appeal hereafter, and will demand to have his foreſight applauded, whoever ſhall at laſt be conquered or victorious.

With NED SMUGGLE all is a ſecret. He believes himſelf watched by obſervation and malignity on every ſide, and rejoices in the dexterity by which he has eſcaped ſnares that never were laid. *Ned* holds that a man is never deceived if he never truſts, and therefore will not tell the name of his taylor or his hatter; he rides out every morning for the air, and pleaſes himſelf with thinking that nobody knows where he has been; when he dines with a friend he never goes to his houſe the neareſt way, but walks up a bye-ſtreet to perplex the ſcent. When he has a coach called, he never tells him at the door the true place to which he is going, but ſtops him in the way that he may give him directions where nobody can hear him. The price of what he buys or ſells is always concealed. He often takes lodgings in the country by a wrong name, and thinks that the world is wondring where he can be hid. All theſe tranſactions he regiſters in a book, which, he ſays, will ſome time or other amaze poſterity.

IT is remarked by *Bacon*, that many men try to procure reputation only by objections, of

of which if they are once admitted the nullity never appears, becauſe the deſign is laid aſide. *This falſe feint of Wiſdom*, ſays he, *is the ruin of Buſineſs*. The whole power of cunning is privative; to ſay nothing, and to do nothing, is the utmoſt of its reach. Yet men thus narrow by nature, and mean by art, are ſometimes able to riſe by the miſcarriages of bravery and the openneſs of integrity; and by watching failures and ſnatching opportunities, obtain advantages which belong properly to higher characters.

N° 93. *Saturday, January* 26.

SAM SOFTLY was bred a Sugar-baker: but ſucceeding to a conſiderable eſtate on the death of his elder brother, he retired early from buſineſs, married a fortune, and ſettled in a country houſe near *Kentiſh-town*. *Sam*, who formerly was a ſportſman, and in his apprenticeſhip uſed to frequent *Barnet* races, keeps a high chaiſe, with a brace of ſeaſoned geldings. During the ſummer months, the principal paſſion and employment of *Sam*'s life is to viſit, in this vehicle, the moſt eminent ſeats of the Nobility and Gentry in different parts of the kingdom, with his wife and ſome ſelect friends. By theſe periodical excurſions *Sam* gratifies many important purpoſes. He aſſiſts the ſeveral pregnancies of his wife; he ſhews his chaiſe to the beſt advantage; he indulges his inſatiable curioſity for finery, which, ſince he has turned gentleman, has grown upon him to an extraordinary

troardinary degree; he diſcovers taſte and ſpirit; and, what is above all, he finds frequent opportunities of diſplaying to the party, at every houſe he ſees, his knowledge of family connections. At firſt, *Sam* was contented with driving a friend between *London* and his villa. Here he prided himſelf in pointing out the boxes of the citizens on each ſide of the road, with an accurate detail of their reſpective failures or ſucceſſes in trade: and harangued on the ſeveral equipages that were accidentally paſſing. Here, too, the ſeats, interſperſed on the ſurrounding hills, afforded ample matter for *Sam*'s curious diſcoveries. For one, he told his companion, a rich *Jew* had offered money; and that a retired widow was courted at another, by an eminent Dry-ſalter. At the ſame time he diſcuſſed the utility and enumerated the expences of the *Iſlington* Turnpike. But *Sam*'s ambition is at preſent raiſed to nobler undertakings.

When the happy hour of the annual expedition arrives, the ſeat of the chaiſe is furniſhed with *Ogilby's Book of Roads*, and a choice quantity of cold tongues. The moſt alarming

alarming diſaſter which can happen to our Hero, who thinks he *throws a Whip* admirably well, is to be overtaken in a road which affords no *Quarter* for wheels. Indeed few men poſſeſs more ſkill or diſcernment for concerting and conducting a *Party of Pleaſure*. When a Seat is to be ſurveyed, he has a peculiar talent at ſelecting ſome ſhady bench in the Park, where the company may moſt commodiouſly refreſh themſelves with cold tongue, chicken, and *French* rolls; and is very ſagacious in diſcovering what cool temple in the garden will be beſt adapted for drinking tea, brought for this purpoſe, in the afternoon, and from which the chaiſe may be reſumed with the greateſt convenience. In viewing the houſe itſelf, he is principally attracted by the chairs and beds, concerning the coſt of which his minute enquiries generally gain the cleareſt information. An Agate Table eaſily diverts his eyes from the moſt capital ſtrokes of *Rubens*, and a *Turkey* Carpet has more charms than a *Titian*. *Sam*, however, dwells with ſome attention on the Family Portraits, particuraly the moſt modern ones; and as this

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is a topick on which the houſe-keeper uſually harangues in a more copious manner, he takes this opportunity of improving his knowledge of inter-marriages. Yet notwithſtanding this appearance of ſatisfaction, *Sam* has ſome objection to all he ſees. One houſe has too much gilding; at another, the chimney-pieces are all monuments; at a third, he conjectures that the beautiful canal muſt certainly be dried up in a hot ſummer. He deſpiſes the ſtatues at *Wilton*, becauſe he thinks he can ſee much better carving at *Weſtminſter* Abbey. But there is one general objection which he is ſure to make at almoſt every houſe, particularly at thoſe which are moſt diſtinguiſhed. He allows that all the apartments are extremely fine, but adds, with a ſneer, that they are too fine to be inhabited.

MISAPPLIED Genius moſt commonly proves ridiculous. Had *Sam*, as Nature intended, contentedly continued in the calmer and leſs conſpicuous purſuits of Sugar-baking, he might have been a reſpectable and uſeful character. At preſent he diſſipates his life in a ſpecious idleneſs, which neither improves himſelf nor his friends. Thoſe talents

which might have benefited ſociety, he expoſes to contempt by falſe pretenſions. He affects pleaſures which he cannot enjoy, and is acquainted only with thoſe ſubjects on which he has no right to talk, and which it is no merit to underſtand.

N° 94. *Saturday, February* 2.

IT is common to find young men ardent and diligent in the purſuit of knowledge; but the progreſs of life very often produces laxity and indifference, and not only thoſe who are at liberty to chuſe their buſineſs and amuſements, but thoſe likewiſe whoſe profeſſions enagage them in literary enquiries, paſs the latter part of their time without improvement, and ſpend the day rather in any other entertainment than that which they might find among their books.

THIS abatement of the vigour of curioſity is ſometimes imputed to the inſufficiency of

of Learning. Men are ſuppoſed to remit their labours, becauſe they find their labours to have been vain; and to ſearch no longer after Truth and Wiſdom, becauſe they at laſt deſpair of finding them.

But this reaſon is for the moſt part very falſely aſſigned. Of Learning, as of Virtue, it may be affirmed, that it is at once honoured and neglected. Whoever forſakes it will for ever look after it with longing, lament the loſs which he does not endeavour to repair, and deſire the good which he wants reſolution to ſeize and keep. The Idler never applauds his own Idleneſs, nor does any man repent of the diligence of his youth.

So many hindrances may obſtruct the acquiſition of Knowledge, that there is little reaſon for wondering that it is in a few hands. To the greater part of mankind the duties of life are inconſiſtent with much ſtudy, and the hours which they would ſpend upon letters muſt be ſtolen from their occupations and their families. Many ſuffer themſelves to be lured by more ſpritely

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and luxurious pleaſures from the ſhades of Contemplation, where they find ſeldom more than a calm delight, ſuch as, though greater than all others, its certainty and its duration being reckoned with its power of gratification, is yet eaſily quitted for ſome extemporary joy, which the preſent moment offers, and another perhaps will put out of reach.

It is the great excellence of Learning, that it borrows very little from time or place; it is not confined to ſeaſon or to climate, to cities or to the country, but may be cultivated and enjoyed where no other pleaſure can be obtained. But this quality, which conſtitutes much of its value, is one occaſion of neglect; what may be done at all times with equal propriety, is deferred from day to day, till the mind is gradually reconciled to the omiſſion, and the attention is turned to other objects. Thus habitual idleneſs gains too much power to be conquered, and the ſoul ſhrinks from the idea of intellectual labour and intenſeneſs of meditation.

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THAT thoſe who profeſs to advance Learning ſometimes obſtruct it, cannot be denied; the continual multiplication of books not only diſtracts choice, but diſappoints enquiry. To him that has moderately ſtored his mind with images, few writers afford any novelty; or what little they have to add to the common ſtock of Learning is ſo buried in the maſs of general notions, that, like ſilver mingled with the ore of lead, it is too little to pay for the labour of ſeparation; and he that has often been deceived by the promiſe of a title, at laſt grows weary of examining, and is tempted to conſider all as equally fallacious.

THERE are indeed ſome repetitions always lawful, becauſe they never deceive. He that writes the Hiſtory of paſt times, undertakes only to decorate known facts by new beauties of method or of ſtyle, or at moſt to illuſtrate them by his own reflections. The Author of a ſyſtem, whether moral or phyſical, is obliged to nothing beyond care of ſelection and regularity of diſpoſition. But there are others who claim the name of Authors merely to diſgrace it, and fill the world with volumes only to bury letters in their own rubbiſh. The

Traveller

Traveller who tells, in a pompous Folio, that he ſaw the *Pantheon* at *Rome*, and the *Medicean Venus* at *Florence*; the Natural Hiſtorian who, deſcribing the productions of a narrow Iſland, recounts all that it has in common with every other part of the world; the Collector of Antiquities, that accounts every thing a curioſity which the Ruins of *Herculaneum* happen to emit, though an inſtrument already ſhewn in a thouſand repoſitories, or a cup common to the ancients, the moderns, and all mankind, may be juſtly cenſured as the Perſecutors of Students, and the Thieves of that Time which never can be reſtored.

N° 95. *Saturday, February* 9.

To the IDLER.

Mr. IDLER,

IT is, I think, univerſally agreed, that ſeldom any good is gotten by complaint; yet we find that few forbear to complain, but thoſe who are afraid of being reproached as the Authors of their own miſeries. I hope therefore for the common permiſſion, to lay my caſe before you and your readers, by which I ſhall diſburthen my heart, though I cannot hope to receive either aſſiſtance or conſolation.

I AM a trader, and owe my fortune to frugality and induſtry. I began with little; but by the eaſy and obvious method of ſpending leſs than I gain, I have every year added ſomething to my ſtock, and expect to have a ſeat in the common-council at the next election.

MY

My wife, who was as prudent as myſelf, died ſix years ago, and left me one ſon and one daughter, for whoſe ſake I reſolved never to marry again, and rejected the overtures of Mrs. *Squeeze*, the broker's widow, who had ten thouſand pounds at her own diſpoſal.

I bred my ſon at a ſchool near *Iſlington*, and when he had learned arithmetick, and wrote a good hand, I took him into the ſhop, deſigning, in about ten years, to retire to *Stratford* or *Hackney*, and leave him eſtabliſhed in the buſineſs.

For four years he was diligent and ſedate, entered the ſhop before it was opened, and when it was ſhut, always examined the pins of the window. In any intermiſſion of buſineſs it was his conſtant practice to peruſe the Ledger. I had always great hopes of him, when I obſerved how ſorrowfully he would ſhake his head over a bad debt, and how eagerly he would liſten to me when I told him that he might, at one time or other, become an Alderman.

We lived together with mutual confidence, till unluckily a viſit was paid him by two of his

his ſchool-fellows, who were placed, I ſuppoſe, in the army, becauſe they were fit for nothing better: They came glittering in the military dreſs, accoſted their old acquaintance, and invited him to a tavern, where, as I have been ſince informed, they ridiculed the meanneſs of commerce, and wondered how a youth of ſpirit could ſpend the prime of life behind a counter.

I DID not ſuſpect any miſchief. I knew my ſon was never without money in his pocket, and was better able to pay his reckoning than his companions, and expected to ſee him return triumphing in his own advantages, and congratulating himſelf that he was not one of thoſe who expoſe their heads to a muſquet bullet for three ſhillings a day.

HE returned ſullen and thoughtful; I ſuppoſed him ſorry for the hard fortune of his friends, and tried to comfort him by ſaying that the war would ſoon be at an end, and that if they had any honeſt occupation, half-pay would be a pretty help. He looked at me with indignation; and ſnatching up his candle,

candle, told me, as he went up the ſtairs, that *he hoped to ſee a battle yet.*

WHY he ſhould hope to ſee a battle I could not conceive, but let him go quietly to ſleep away his folly. Next day he made two miſtakes in the firſt bill, diſobliged a cuſtomer by ſurly anſwers, and dated all his entries in the Journal in a wrong month. At night he met his military companions again, came home late, and quarrelled with the maid.

FROM this fatal interview he has gradually loſt all his laudable paſſions and deſires. He ſoon grew uſeleſs in the ſhop, where, indeed, I did not willingly truſt him any longer; for he often miſtook the price of goods to his own loſs, and once gave a promiſſory note inſtead of a receipt.

I DID not know to what degree he was corrupted, till an honeſt taylor gave me notice that he had beſpoke a laced ſuit, which was to be left for him at a houſe kept by the ſiſter of one of my journeymen. I went to this clandeſtine lodging, and find, to my amazement, all the ornaments of a fine Gentleman, which

he has taken upon credit, or purchaſed with money ſubducted from the ſhop.

THIS detection has made him deſperate. He now openly declares his reſolution to be a gentleman; ſays that his ſoul is too great for a counting-houſe; ridicules the converſation of city taverns; talks of new plays, and boxes, and ladies; gives Ducheſſes for his toaſts; carries ſilver, for readineſs, in his waiſtcoat-pocket; and comes home at night in a chair, with ſuch thunders at the door, as have more than once brought the watchmen from their ſtands.

LITTLE expences will not hurt us; and I could forgive a few juvenile frolicks, if he would be careful of the main, but his favourite topick is contempt of money, which, he ſays, is of no uſe but to be ſpent. Riches, without honour, he holds empty things; and once told me to my face, that wealthy plodders were only purveyors for men of ſpirit.

HE is always impatient in the company of his old friends, and ſeldom ſpeaks till he is warmed with wine; he then entertains us

with accounts that we do not desire to hear, of intrigues among lords and ladies, and quarrels between officers of the guards; shews a miniature on his snuff-box, and wonders that any man can look upon the new dancer without rapture.

All this is very provoking, and yet all this might be borne, if the boy could support his pretensions. But whatever he may think, he is yet far from the accomplishments which he has endeavoured to purchase at so dear a rate. I have watched him in public places. He sneaks in like a man that knows he is where he should not be; he is proud to catch the slightest salutation, and often claims it when it is not intended. Other men receive dignity from dress, but my booby looks always more meanly for his finery. Dear Mr. *Idler*, tell him what must at last become of a fop, whom pride will not suffer to be a trader, and whom long habits in a shop forbid to be a gentleman.

I am, Sir, &c.

Tim. Wainscot.

N° 96. *Saturday, February* 16.

HACHO, a King of *Lapland*, was in his youth the moſt renowned of the northern warriors. His martial atchievements remain engraved on a pillar of flint in the Rocks of *Hanga*, and are to this day ſolemnly carrolled to the Harp by the *Laplanders*, at the fires with which they celebrate their nightly feſtivities. Such was his intrepid ſpirit, that he ventured to paſs the Lake *Vether* to the Iſle of *Wizards*, where he deſcended alone into the dreary vault in which a Magician had been kept bound for ſix ages, and read the *Gothick* characters inſcribed on his brazen mace. His eye was ſo piercing, that, as antient chronicles report, he could blunt the weapons of his enemies only by looking at them. At twelve years of age he carried an iron veſſel of a prodigious weight, for the length of five furlongs, in the preſence of all the chiefs of his father's caſtle.

Nor was he leſs celebrated for his prudence and wiſdom. Two of his proverbs are yet remembred and repeated among the *Laplanders*. To expreſs the vigilance of the Supreme Being, he was wont to ſay, *Odin's Belt is always buckled.* To ſhew that the moſt proſperous condition of life is often hazardous, his leſſon was, *When you ſlide on the ſmootheſt Ice, beware of pits beneath.* He conſoled his countrymen, when they were once preparing to leave the frozen deſarts of *Lapland*, and reſolved to ſeek ſome warmer climate, by telling them, that the eaſtern nations, notwithſtanding their boaſted fertility, paſſed every night amidſt the horrors of anxious apprehenſion, and were inexpreſſibly affrighted, and almoſt ſtunned, every morning, with the noiſe of the ſun while he was riſing.

His temperance and ſeverity of manners were his chief praiſe. In his early years he never taſted wine; nor would he drink out of a painted cup. He conſtantly ſlept in his armour, with his ſpear in his hand; nor would he uſe a battle-ax whoſe handle was inlaid with braſs. He did not, however, perſevere

perſevere in this contempt of luxury; nor did he cloſe his days with honour.

One evening, after hunting the *Gulos*, or wild-dog, being bewildered in a ſolitary foreſt, and having paſſed the fatigues of the day without any interval of refreſhment, he diſcovered a large ſtore of honey in the hollow of a pine. This was a dainty which he had never taſted before, and being at once faint and hungry, he fed greedily upon it. From this unuſual and delicious repaſt he received ſo much ſatisfaction, that, at his return home, he commanded honey to be ſerved up at his table every day. His palate, by degrees, became refined and vitiated; he began to loſe his native reliſh for ſimple fare, and contracted a habit of indulging himſelf in delicacies; he ordered the delightful gardens of his caſtle to be thrown open, in which the moſt luſcious fruits had been ſuffered to ripen and decay, unobſerved and untouched, for many revolving autumns, and gratified his appetite with luxurious deſſerts. At length he found it expedient to introduce wine, as an agreeable improvement, or a neceſſary ingredient, to his new way of living; and

having once taſted it, he was tempted, by little and little, to give a looſe to the exceſſes of intoxication. His general ſimplicity of life was changed; he perfumed his apartments by burning the wood of the moſt aromatick fir, and commanded his helmet to be ornamented with beautiful rows of the teeth of the reindeer. Indolence and effeminacy ſtole upon him by pleaſing and imperceptible gradations, relaxed the ſinews of his reſolution, and extinguiſhed his thirſt of military glory.

WHILE *Hacho* was thus immerſed in pleaſure and in repoſe, it was reported to him, one morning, that the preceding night, a diſaſtrous omen had been diſcovered, and that bats and hideous birds had drunk up the oil which nouriſhed the perpetual lamp in the temple of *Odin*. About the ſame time, a meſſenger arrived to tell him, that the king of *Norway* had invaded his kingdom with a formidable army. *Hacho*, terrified as he was with the omen of the night, and enervated with indulgence, rouzed himſelf from his voluptuous lethargy, and recollecting ſome faint and few ſparks of veteran valour, marched forward to meet him. Both armies joined

joined battle in the foreſt where *Hacho* had been loſt after hunting; and it ſo happened, that the king of *Norway* challenged him to ſingle combat, near the place where he had taſted the honey. The *Lapland* Chief, languid and long diſuſed to arms, was ſoon overpowered! he fell to the ground; and before his inſulting adverſary ſtruck his head from his body, uttered this exclamation, which the *Laplanders* ſtill uſe as an early leſſon to their children: "The vicious man ſhould date his "deſtruction from the firſt temptation. How "juſtly do I fall a ſacrifice to ſloth and luxury, "in the place where I firſt yielded to thoſe al-"lurements which ſeduced me to deviate from "temperance and innocence! The honey "which I taſted in this foreſt, and not the "hand of the king of *Norway*, conquers "*Hacho*."

N° 97. *Saturday, February* 23.

IT may, I think, be juſtly obſerved, that few books diſappoint their readers more than the Narrations of Travellers. One part of mankind is naturally curious to learn the ſentiments, manners, and condition of the reſt; and every mind that has leiſure or power to extend its views, muſt be deſirous of knowing in what proportion Providence has diſtributed the bleſſings of Nature, or the advantages of Art, among the ſeveral nations of the earth.

THIS general deſire eaſily procures readers to every book from which it can expect gratification. The adventurer upon unknown coaſts, and the deſcriber of diſtant regions, is always welcomed as a man who has laboured for the pleaſure of others, and who is able to enlarge our knowledge and rectify our opinions; but when the volume

lume is opened, nothing is found but ſuch general accounts as leave no diſtinct idea behind them, or ſuch minute enumerations as few can read with either profit or delight.

EVERY writer of Travels ſhould conſider, that, like all other Authors, he undertakes either to inſtruct or pleaſe, or to mingle pleaſure with inſtruction. He that inſtructs muſt offer to the mind ſomething to be imitated, or ſomething to be avoided; he that pleaſes muſt offer new images to his reader, and enable him to form a tacit compariſon of his own ſtate with that of others.

THE greater part of Travellers tell nothing, becauſe their method of Travelling ſupplies them with nothing to be told. He that enters a town at night and ſurveys it in the morning, and then haſtens away to another place, and gueſſes at the manners of the inhabitants by the entertainment which his inn afforded him, may pleaſe himſelf for a time with a haſty change of ſcenes, and a confuſed remembrance of Palaces and

Churches; he may gratify his eye with variety of Landſcapes; and regale his palate with a ſucceſſion of Vintages; but let him be contented to pleaſe himſelf without endeavour to diſturb others. Why ſhould he record excurſions by which nothing could be learned, or wiſh to make a ſhow of knowledge which, without ſome power of intuition unknown to other mortals, he never could attain?

Of thoſe who crowd the world with their itineraries, ſome have no other purpoſe than to deſcribe the face of the country; thoſe who ſit idle at home, and are curious to know what is done or ſuffered in diſtant countries, may be informed by one of theſe wanderers, that on a certain day he ſet out early with the caravan, and in the firſt hour's march ſaw, towards the ſouth, a hill covered with trees, then paſſed over a ſtream, which ran northward with a ſwift courſe, but which is probably dry in the ſummer months; that an hour after he ſaw ſomething to the right which looked at a diſtance like a caſtle with towers, but which he diſcovered afterwards to be a craggy

craggy rock; that he then entered a valley, in which he ſaw ſeveral trees tall and flouriſhing, watered by a rivulet not marked in the maps, of which he was not able to learn the name; that the road afterward grew ſtony, and the country uneven, where he obſerved among the hills many hollows worn by torrents, and was told that the road was paſſable only part of the year; that going on they found the remains of a building, once perhaps a fortreſs to ſecure the paſs, or to reſtrain the robbers, of which the preſent inhabitants can give no other account than that it is haunted by Fairies; that they went to dine at the foot of a rock, and travelled the reſt of the day along the banks of a river, from which the road turned aſide towards evening, and brought them within ſight of a village, which was once a conſiderable town, but which afforded them neither good victuals nor commodious lodging.

Thus he conducts his reader through wet and dry, over rough and ſmooth, without incidents, without reflection; and, if he obtains his company for another day, will diſ-

miſs him again at night, equally fatigued with a like ſucceſſion of rocks and ſtreams, mountains and ruins.

THIS is the common ſtyle of thoſe ſons of enterprize, who viſit ſavage countries, and range through ſolitude and deſolation; who paſs a deſart, and tell that it is ſandy; who croſs a valley, and find that it is green. There are others of more delicate ſenſibility, that viſit only the Realms of Elegance and Softneſs; that wander through *Italian* Palaces, and amuſe the gentle reader with catalogues of Pictures; that hear Maſſes in magnificent Churches, and recount the Number of the Pillars or Variegations of the Pavement. And there are yet others, who, in diſdain of trifles, copy Inſcriptions elegant and rude, ancient and modern; and tranſcribe into their book the walls of every edifice, ſacred or civil. He that reads theſe books muſt conſider his labour as its own reward; for he will find nothing on which Attention can fix, or which Memory can retain.

HE

He that would travel for the entertainment of others, ſhould remember that the great object of remark is human life. Every Nation has ſomething particular in its Manufactures, its Works of Genius, its Medicines, its Agriculture, its Cuſtoms, and its Policy. He only is a uſeful Traveller, who brings home ſomething by which his country may be benefited; who procures ſome ſupply of Want or ſome Mitigation of Evil, which may enable his readers to compare their condition with that of others, to improve it whenever it is worſe, and whenever it is better to enjoy it.

N° 98. *Saturday, March* 1.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

I AM the daughter of a Gentleman, who during his life-time enjoyed a ſmall income which aroſe from a Penſion from the Court, by which he was enabled to live in a genteel and comfortable manner.

BY the ſituation in life in which he was placed, he was frequently introduced into the company of thoſe of much greater fortunes than his own, among whom he was always received with complaiſance, and treated with civility.

AT ſix years of age I was ſent to a boarding ſchool in the country, at which I continued till my father's death. This melancholy event happened at a time when I was by no means of ſufficient age to manage for myſelf, while

while the paſſions of youth continued unſubdued, and before experience could guide my ſentiments or my actions.

I WAS then taken from ſchool by an uncle, to the care of whom my father had committed me on his dying bed. With him I lived ſeveral years, and as he was unmarried, the management of his family was committed to me. In this character I always endeavoured to acquit myſelf, if not with applauſe, at leaſt without cenſure.

AT the age of twenty-one a young gentleman of ſome fortune paid his addreſſes to me, and offered me terms of marriage. This propoſal I ſhould readily have accepted, becauſe from vicinity of reſidence, and from many opportunities of obſerving his behaviour, I had in ſome ſort contracted an affection for him. My uncle, for what reaſon I do not know, refuſed his conſent to this alliance, though it would have been complied with by the father of the young gentleman; and as the future condition of my life was wholly dependent on him, I was not willing

to

to diſoblige him, and therefore, though unwillingly, declined the offer.

My uncle, who poſſeſſed a plentiful fortune, frequently hinted to me in converſation, that at his death I ſhould be provided for in ſuch a manner that I ſhould be able to make my future life comfortable and happy. As this promiſe was often repeated, I was the leſs anxious about any proviſion for myſelf. In a ſhort time my uncle was taken ill, and though all poſſible means were made uſe of for his recovery, in a few days he died.

The ſorrow ariſing from the loſs of a relation, by whom I had been always treated with the greateſt kindneſs, however grievous, was not the worſt of my misfortunes. As he enjoyed an almoſt uninterrupted ſtate of health, he was the leſs mindful of his diſſolution, and died inteſtate; by which means his whole fortune devolved to a nearer relation, the heir at law.

Thus excluded from all hopes of living in the manner with which I have ſo long flattered

tered myſelf, I am doubtful what method I ſhall take to procure a decent maintenance. I have been educated in a manner that has ſet me above a ſtate of ſervitude, and my ſituation renders me unfit for the company of thoſe with whom I have hitherto converſed. But, though diſappointed in my expectations, I do not deſpair. I will hope that aſſiſtance may ſtill be obtained for innocent diſtreſs, and that friendſhip, though rare, is yet not impoſſible to be found.

I am, Sir,

Your humble ſervant,

SOPHIA HEEDFULL.

N° 99. *Saturday, March* 8.

AS *Ortogrul* of *Baſra* was one day wandering along the ſtreets of *Bagdat*, muſing on the varieties of merchandize which the ſhops offered to his view, and obſerving the different occupations which buſied the multitudes on every ſide, he was awakened from the tranquillity of meditation by a croud that obſtructed his paſſage. He raiſed his eyes, and ſaw the chief Viſier, who, having returned from the Divan, was entering his palace.

ORTOGRUL mingled with the attendants, and being ſuppoſed to have ſome petition for the Viſier, was permitted to enter. He ſurveyed the ſpaciouſneſs of the apartments, admired the walls hung with golden tapeſtry, and the floors covered with ſilken carpets, and deſpiſed the ſimple neatneſs of his own little habitation.

SURELY,

SURELY, ſaid he to himſelf, this palace is the ſeat of happineſs, where pleaſure ſucceeds to pleaſure, and diſcontent and ſorrow can have no admiſſion. Whatever nature has provided for the delight of ſenſe, is here ſpread forth to be enjoyed. What can mortals hope or imagine, which the maſter of this palace has not obtained? The diſhes of luxury cover his table, the voice of harmony lulls him in his bowers; he breathes the fragrance of the groves of *Java*, and ſleeps upon the down of the cygnets of *Ganges*. He ſpeaks and his mandate is obeyed, he wiſhes and his wiſh is gratified! all whom he ſees obey him, and all whom he hears flatter him. How different, *Ortogrul*, is thy condition, who art doomed to the perpetual torments of unſatisfied deſire, and who haſt no amuſement in thy power that can withhold thee from thy own reflections! They tell thee that thou art wiſe; but what does wiſdom avail with poverty? None will flatter the poor, and the wiſe have very little power of flattering themſelves. That man is ſurely the moſt wretched of the ſons of wretchedneſs, who lives with his own faults and follies always before him,

and

and who has none to reconcile him to himſelf by praiſe and veneration. I have long ſought content, and have not found it; I will from this moment endeavour to be rich.

FULL of his new reſolution, he ſhut himſelf in his chamber for ſix months, to deliberate how he ſhould grow rich; he ſometimes purpoſed to offer himſelf as a counſellor to one of the Kings of *India*, and ſometimes reſolved to dig for diamonds in the mines of *Golconda*. One day, after ſome hours paſſed in violent fluctuation of opinion, ſleep inſenſibly ſeized him in his chair; he dreamed that he was ranging a deſart country in ſearch of ſome one that might teach him to grow rich; and as he ſtood on the top of a hill ſhaded with cypreſs, in doubt whither to direct his ſteps, his father appeared on a ſudden ſtanding before him. *Ortogrul*, ſaid the old man, I know thy perplexity; liſten to thy father; turn thine eye on the oppoſite mountain. *Ortogrul* looked, and ſaw a torrent tumbling down the rocks, roaring with the noiſe of thunder, and ſcattering its foam on the impending woods. Now, ſaid his father, behold the valley that lies between the hills. *Ortogrul* looked, and

and eſpied a little well, out of which iſſued a ſmall rivulet. Tell me now, ſaid his father, doſt thou wiſh for ſudden affluence, that may pour upon thee like the mountain torrent, or for a ſlow and gradual encreaſe, reſembling the rill gliding from the well? Let me be quickly rich, ſaid *Ortogrul*; let the golden ſtream be quick and violent. Look round thee, ſaid his father, once again. *Ortogrul* looked, and perceived the channel of the torrent dry and duſty; but following the rivulet from the well, he traced it to a wide lake, which the ſupply, ſlow and conſtant, kept always full. He waked, and determined to grow rich by ſilent profit, and perſevering induſtry.

HAVING ſold his patrimony, he engaged in merchandize, and in twenty years purchaſed lands on which he raiſed a houſe, equal in ſumptuouſneſs to that of the Viſier, to which he invited all the miniſters of pleaſure, expecting to enjoy all the felicity which he had imagined riches able to afford. Leiſure ſoon made him weary of himſelf, and he longed to be perſuaded that he was great and happy.

He

He was courteous and liberal; he gave all that approached him hopes of pleaſing him, and all who ſhould pleaſe him hopes of being rewarded. Every art of praiſe was tried, and every ſource of adulatory fiction was exhauſted. *Ortogrul* heard his flatterers without delight, becauſe he found himſelf unable to believe them. His own heart told him its frailties, his own underſtanding reproached him with his faults. How long, ſaid he, with a deep ſigh, have I been labouring in vain to amaſs wealth which at laſt is uſeleſs. Let no man hereafter wiſh to be rich, who is already too wiſe to be flattered.

N° 100. *Saturday, March* 15.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

THE uncertainty and defects of Language have produced very frequent complaints among the Learned; yet there ſtill remain many words among us undefined, which are very neceſſary to be rightly underſtood, and which produce very miſchievous miſtakes when they are erroneouſly interpreted.

I LIVED in a ſtate of celibacy beyond the uſual time. In the hurry firſt of pleaſure, and afterwards of buſineſs, I felt no want of a domeſtick companion; but becoming weary of labour, I ſoon grew more weary of idleneſs, and thought it reaſonable to follow the cuſtom of life, and to ſeek ſome ſolace of my cares in female tenderneſs, and ſome amuſement of my leiſure in female chearfulneſs.

THE

THE choice which has been long delayed is commonly made at laſt with great caution. My reſolution was, to keep my paſſions neutral, and to marry only in compliance with my reaſon. I drew upon a page of my pocket-book a ſcheme of all female virtues and vices, with the vices which border upon every virtue, and the virtues which are allied to every vice. I conſidered that wit was ſarcaſtick, and magnanimity imperious; that avarice was œconomical, and ignorance obſequious; and having eſtimated the good and evil of every quality, employed my own diligence and that of my friends to find the lady in whom nature and reaſon had reached that happy mediocrity which is equally remote from exuberance and deficience.

EVERY woman had her admirers and her cenſurers, and the expectations which one raiſed were by another quickly depreſſed: yet there was one in whoſe favour almoſt all ſuffrages concurred. Miſs *Gentle* was univerſally allowed to be a good ſort of woman. Her fortune was not large, but ſo prudently managed, that ſhe wore finer cloaths

and ſaw more company than many who were known to be twice as rich. Miſs *Gentle*'s viſits were every where welcome, and whatever family ſhe favoured with her company, ſhe always left behind her ſuch a degree of kindneſs as recommended her to others; every day extended her acquaintance, and all who knew her declared that they never met with a better ſort of woman.

To Miſs *Gentle* I made my addreſſes, and was received with great equality of temper. She did not in the days of courtſhip aſſume the privilege of impoſing rigorous commands, or reſenting ſlight offences. If I forgot any of her injunctions, I was gently reminded; if I miſſed the minute of appointment, I was eaſily forgiven. I foreſaw nothing in marriage but a halcyon calm, and longed for the happineſs which was to be found in the inſeparable ſociety of a good ſort of woman.

The jointure was ſoon ſettled by the intervention of friends, and the day came in which Miſs *Gentle* was made mine for ever. The firſt month was paſſed eaſily enough in

receiving and repaying the civilities of our friends. The bride practiſed with great exactneſs all the niceties of ceremony, and diſtributed her notice in the moſt punctilious proportions to the friends who ſurrounded us with their happy auguries.

But the time ſoon came when we were left to ourſelves, and were to receive our pleaſures from each other, and I then began to perceive that I was not formed to be much delighted by a good ſort of woman. Her great principle is, that the orders of a family muſt not be broken. Every hour of the day has its employment inviolably appropriated, nor will any importunity perſuade her to walk in the garden at the time which ſhe has devoted to her needlework, or to ſit up ſtairs in that part of the forenoon which ſhe has accuſtomed herſelf to ſpend in the back parlour. She allows herſelf to ſit half an hour after breakfaſt, and an hour after dinner; while I am talking or reading to her, ſhe keeps her eye upon her watch, and when the minute of departure comes, will leave an argument unfiniſhed, or the intrigue of a play unravelled. She once called me

to ſupper when I was watching an eclipſe, and ſummoned me at another time to bed when I was going to give directions at a fire.

HER converſation is ſo habitually cautious, that ſhe never talks to me but in general terms, as to one whom it is dangerous to truſt. For diſcriminations of character ſhe has no names: all whom ſhe mentions are honeſt men and agreeable women. She ſmiles not by ſenſation, but by practice. Her laughter is never excited but by a joke, and her notion of a joke is not very delicate. The repetition of a good joke does not weaken its effect; if ſhe has laughed once, ſhe will laugh again.

SHE is an enemy to nothing but ill-nature and pride, but ſhe has frequent reaſon to lament that they are ſo frequent in the world. All who are not equally pleaſed with the good and bad, with the elegant and groſs, with the witty and the dull, all who diſtinguiſh excellence from defect, ſhe conſiders as ill-natured; and ſhe condemns as proud all who repreſs impertinence or quell preſumption,

tion, or expect reſpect from any other eminence than that of fortune, to which ſhe is always willing to pay homage.

THERE are none whom ſhe openly hates; for if once ſhe ſuffers, or believes herſelf to ſuffer, any contempt or inſult, ſhe never diſmiſſes it from her mind, but takes all opportunities to tell how eaſily ſhe can forgive. There are none whom ſhe loves much better than others; for when any of her acquaintance decline in the opinion of the world, ſhe always finds it inconvenient to viſit them; her affection continues unaltered, but it is impoſſible to be intimate with the whole town.

SHE daily exerciſes her benevolence by pitying every misfortune that happens to every family whithin her circle of notice; ſhe is in hourly terrors leſt one ſhould catch cold in the rain, and another be frighted by the high wind. Her charity ſhe ſhews by lamenting that ſo many poor wretches ſhould languiſh in the ſtreets, and by wondering what the great can think on that they do ſo little good with ſuch large eſtates.

HER

HER houſe is elegant and her table dainty, though ſhe has little taſte of elegance, and is wholly free from vicious luxury; but ſhe comforts herſelf that nobody can ſay that her houſe is dirty, or that her diſhes are not well dreſt.

THIS, Mr. *Idler*, I have found by long experience to be the character of a good ſort of woman, which I have ſent you for the information of thoſe by whom *a good ſort of woman* and *a good woman* may happen to be uſed as equivalent terms, and who may ſuffer by the miſtake like

Your humble ſervant,

TIM WARNER.

N° 101. *Saturday, March* 22.

OMAR, the ſon of *Huſſan*, had paſſed ſeventy-five years in honour and proſperity. The favour of three ſucceſſive Califs had filled his houſe with gold and ſilver, and whenever he appeared, the benedictions of the people proclaimed his paſſage.

TERRESTRIAL happineſs is of ſhort continuance. The brightneſs of the flame is waſting its fuel; the fragrant flower is paſſing away in its own odours. The vigour of *Omar* began to fail, the curls of beauty fell from his head, ſtrength departed from his hands, and agility from his feet. He gave back to the Calif the keys of truſt and the ſeals of ſecrecy, and ſought no other pleaſure for the remains of life than the converſe of the wiſe, and the gratitude of the good.

THE

THE powers of his mind were yet unimpaired. His chamber was filled by viſitants, eager to catch the dictates of experience, and officious to pay the tribute of admiration. *Caled*, the ſon of the viceroy of *Egypt*, entered every day early, and retired late. He was beautiful and eloquent; *Omar* admired his wit, and loved his docility. Tell me, ſaid *Caled*, thou to whoſe voice nations have liſtened, and whoſe wiſdom is known to the extremities of *Aſia*, tell me how I may reſemble *Omar* the prudent. The arts by which you have gained power and preſerved it, are to you no longer neceſſary or uſeful; impart to me the ſecret of your conduct, and teach me the plan upon which your wiſdom has built your fortune.

YOUNG man, ſaid *Omar*, it is of little uſe to form plans of life. When I took my firſt ſurvey of the world, in my twentieth year, having conſidered the various conditions of mankind, in the hour of ſolitude I ſaid thus to myſelf, leaning againſt a cedar which ſpread its branches over my head; Seventy years are allowed to man;

I have yet fifty remaining: Ten years I will allot to the attainment of knowledge, and ten I will paſs in foreign countries; I ſhall be learned, and therefore ſhall be honoured; every city will ſhout at my arrival, and every ſtudent will ſolicit my friendſhip. Twenty years thus paſſed will ſtore my mind with images, which I ſhall be buſy through the reſt of my life in combining and comparing. I ſhall revel in inexhauſtible accumulations of intellectual riches; I ſhall find new pleaſures for every moment, and ſhall never more be weary of myſelf. I will, however, not deviate too far from the beaten track of life, but will try what can be found in female delicacy. I will marry a wife beautiful as the *Houries*, and wiſe as *Zobeide*; with her I will live twenty years within the ſuburbs of *Bagdat*, in every pleaſure that wealth can purchaſe, and fancy can invent. I will then retire to a rural dwelling, paſs my laſt days in obſcurity and contemplation, and lie ſilently down on the bed of death. Through my life it ſhall be my ſettled reſolution, that I will never depend upon the ſmile of Princes; that I will never ſtand

expoſed

expoſed to the artifices of courts; I will never pant for publick honours, nor diſturb my quiet with affairs of ſtate. Such was my ſcheme of life, which I impreſſed indelibly upon my memory.

THE firſt part of my enſuing time was to be ſpent in ſearch of knowledge, and I know not how I was diverted from my deſign. I had no viſible impediments without, nor any ungovernable paſſions within. I regarded knowledge as the higheſt honour and the moſt engaging pleaſure; yet day ſtole upon day, and month glided after month, till I found that ſeven years of the firſt ten had vaniſhed, and left nothing behind them. I now poſtponed my purpoſe of travelling; for why ſhould I go abroad while ſo much remained to be learned at home? I immured myſelf for four years, and ſtudied the laws of the empire. The fame of my ſkill reached the judges; I was found able to ſpeak upon doubtful queſtions, and was commanded to ſtand at the footſtool of the Caliſ. I was heard with attention, I was conſulted with confidence, and the love of praiſe faſtened on my heart.

I STILL wiſhed to ſee diſtant countries, liſtened with rapture to the relations of travellers, and reſolved ſome time to aſk my diſmiſſion, that I might feaſt my ſoul with novelty; but my preſence was always neceſſary, and the ſtream of buſineſs hurried me along. Sometimes I was afraid leſt I ſhould be charged with ingratitude; but I ſtill propoſed to travel, and therefore would not confine myſelf by marriage.

IN my fiftieth year I began to ſuſpect that the time of travelling was paſt, and thought it beſt to lay hold on the felicity yet in my power, and indulge myſelf in domeſtick pleaſures. But at fifty no man eaſily finds a woman beautiful as the *Houries*, and wiſe as *Zobeide*. I enquired and rejected, conſulted and deliberated, till the ſixty-ſecond year made me aſhamed of gazing upon girls. I had now nothing left but retirement, and for retirement I never found a time, till diſeaſe forced me from publick employment.

SUCH was my ſcheme, and ſuch has been its conſequence. With an inſatiable thirſt for

for knowledge, I trifled away the years of improvement; with a reſtleſs deſire of ſeeing different countries, I have always reſided in the ſame city; with the higheſt expectation of connubial felicity, I have lived unmarried; and with unalterable reſolutions of contemplative retirement, I am going to die within the walls of *Bagdat*.

N° 102. *Saturday, March* 29.

IT very ſeldom happens to man that his buſineſs is his pleaſure. What is done from neceſſity, is ſo often to be done when againſt the preſent inclination, and ſo often fills the mind with anxiety, that an habitual diſlike ſteals upon us, and we ſhrink involuntarily from the remembrance of our taſk. This is the reaſon why almoſt every one wiſhes to quit his employment; he does not like another ſtate, but is diſguſted with his own.

FROM this unwillingneſs to perform more than is required of that which is commonly

performed with reluctance, it proceeds that few Authors write their own lives. Statesmen, Courtiers, Ladies, Generals, and Seamen, have given to the world their own stories, and the events with which their different stations have made them acquainted. They retired to the closet as to a place of quiet and amusement, and pleased themselves with writing, because they could lay down the pen whenever they were weary. But the Author, however conspicuous, or however important, either in the publick eye or in his own, leaves his life to be related by his successors, for he cannot gratify his vanity but by sacrificing his ease.

It is commonly supposed that the uniformity of a studious life affords no matter for narration: but the truth is, that of the most studious life a great part passes without study. An Author partakes of the common condition of humanity; he is born and married like another man; he has hopes and fears, expectations and disappointments, griefs and joys, and friends and enemies, like a courtier or a statesman; nor can I conceive why his affairs should not excite curiosity as much

much as the whiſper of a drawing-room, or the factions of a camp.

NOTHING detains the Reader's attention more powerfully than deep involutions of diſtreſs, or ſudden viciſſitudes of fortune; and theſe might be abundantly afforded by memoirs of the ſons of literature. They are intangled by contracts which they know not how to fulfil, and obliged to write on ſubjects which they do not underſtand. Every publication is a new period of time from which ſome encreaſe or declenſion of fame is to be reckoned. The gradations of a Hero's life are from battle to battle, and of an Author's from book to book.

SUCCESS and miſcarriage have the ſame effects in all conditions. The proſperous are feared, hated, and flattered; and the unfortunate avoided, pitied, and deſpiſed. No ſooner is a book publiſhed than the writer may judge of the opinion of the world. If his acquaintance preſs round him in publick places, or ſalute him from the other ſide of the ſtreet, if invitations to dinner come thick upon him, and thoſe with

with whom he dines keep him to ſupper; if the Ladies turn to him when his coat is plain, and the footmen ſerve him with attention and alacrity; he may be ſure that his work has been praiſed by ſome leader of literary faſhions.

Of declining reputation the ſymptoms are not leſs eaſily obſerved. If the Author enters a coffee-houſe, he has a box to himſelf; if he calls at a bookſeller's, the boy turns his back; and what is the moſt fatal of all prognoſticks, Authors will viſit him in a morning, and talk to him hour after hour of the malevolence of criticks, the neglect of merit, the bad taſte of the age, and the candour of poſterity.

All this modified and varied by accident and cuſtom would form very amuſing ſcenes of biography, and might recreate many a mind which is very little delighted with conſpiracies or battles, intrigues of a court, or debates of a Parliament: To this might be added all the changes of the countenance of a patron, traced from the firſt glow which flattery raiſes in his cheek, through ardour of fondneſs,

fondneſs, vehemence of promiſe, magnificence of praiſe, excuſe of delay, and lamentation of inability, to the laſt chill look of final diſmiſſion, when the one grows weary of ſolliciting, and the other of hearing ſollicitation.

THUS copious are the materials which have been hitherto ſuffered to lie neglected, while the repoſitories of every family that has produced a ſoldier or a miniſter are ranſacked, and libraries are crouded with uſeleſs folios of ſtate papers which will never be read, and which contribute nothing to valuable knowledge.

I HOPE the learned will be taught to know their own ſtrength and their value, and inſtead of devoting their lives to the honour of thoſe who ſeldom thank them for their labours, reſolve at laſt to do juſtice to themſelves.

N° 103. *Saturday, April 5.*

Reſpicere ad longæ juſſit ſpatia ultima vitæ.
JUV.

MUCH of the Pain and Pleaſure of mankind ariſes from the conjectures which every one makes of the thoughts of others; we all enjoy praiſe which we do not hear, and reſent contempt which we do not ſee. The *Idler* may therefore be forgiven, if he ſuffers his Imagination to repreſent to him what his readers will ſay or think when they are informed that they have now his laſt paper in their hands.

VALUE is more frequently raiſed by ſcarcity than by uſe. That which lay neglected when it was common, riſes in eſtimation as its quantity becomes leſs. We ſeldom learn the true want of what we have till it is diſcovered that we can have no more.

THIS

THIS eſſay will, perhaps, be read with care even by thoſe who have not yet attended to any other; and he that finds this late attention recompenſed, will not forbear to wiſh that he had beſtowed it ſooner.

THOUGH the *Idler* and his readers have contracted no cloſe friendſhip, they are perhaps both unwilling to part. There are few things not purely evil, of which we can ſay, without ſome emotion of uneaſineſs, *this is the laſt*. Thoſe who never could agree together, ſhed tears when mutual diſcontent has determined them to final ſeparation; of a place which has been frequently viſited, though without pleaſure, the laſt look is taken with heavineſs of heart; and the *Idler*, with all his chillneſs of tranquillity, is not wholly unaffected by the thought that his laſt eſſay is now before him.

THIS ſecret horrour of the laſt is inſeparable from a thinking being, whoſe life is limited, and to whom death, is dreadful. We always make a ſecret compariſon between a part and the whole; the termination

tion of any period of life reminds us that life itſelf has likewiſe its termination; when we have done any thing for the laſt time, we involuntarily reflect that a part of the days allotted us is paſt, and that as more is paſt there is leſs remaining.

It is very happily and kindly provided, that in every life there are certain pauſes and interruptions, which force conſideration upon the careleſs, and ſeriouſneſs upon the light; points of time where one courſe of action ends and another begins: and by viciſſitude of fortune, or alteration of employment, by change of place, or loſs of friendſhip, we are forced to ſay of ſomething, *this is the laſt.*

An even and unvaried tenour of life always hides from our apprehenſion the approach of its end. Succeſſion is not perceived but by variation; he that lives to-day as he lived yeſterday, and expects that as the preſent day is ſuch will be the morrow, eaſily conceives time as running in a circle and returning to itſelf. The uncertainty of our duration is impreſſed commonly by diſſimilitude of condition; it is only

only by finding life changeable that we are reminded of its ſhortneſs.

THIS conviction, however forcible at every new impreſſion, is every moment fading from the mind; and partly by the inevitable incurſion of new images, and partly by voluntary excluſion of unwelcome thoughts, we are again expoſed to the univerſal fallacy; and we muſt do another thing for the laſt time, before we conſider that the time is nigh when we ſhall do no more.

AS the laſt *Idler* is publiſhed in that ſolemn week which the Chriſtian world has always ſet apart for the examination of the conſcience, the review of life, the extinction of earthly deſires, and the renovation of holy purpoſes, I hope that my readers are already diſpoſed to view every incident with ſerioufneſs, and improve it by meditation; and that when they ſee this ſeries of trifles brought to a concluſion, they will conſider that, by outliving the *Idler*, they have paſſed weeks, months, and years, which are now no longer in their power; than an end muſt in time be put to every thing great as to every thing little; that to life

life muſt come its laſt hour, and to this ſyſtem of being its laſt day, the hour at which probation ceaſes, and repentance will be vain; the day in which every work of the hand, and imagination of the heart, ſhall be brought to judgement, and an everlaſting futurity ſhall be determined by the paſt.

END OF THE IDLER.

ADDITIONAL

ESSAYS.

AN ESSAY ON EPITAPHS.

THOUGH criticiſm has been cultivated in every age of learning, by men of great abilities and extenſive knowledge, till the rules of writing are become rather burthenſome than inſtructive to the mind; though almoſt every ſpecies of compoſition has been the ſubject of particular treatiſes, and given birth to definitions, diſtinctions, precepts, and illuſtrations; yet no critic of note, that has fallen within my obſervation, has hitherto thought *ſepulchral inſcriptions* worthy of a minute examination, or pointed out with proper accuracy their beauties and defects.

THE

THE reaſons of this neglect it is uſeleſs to enquire, and perhaps impoſſible to diſcover; it might be juſtly expected that this kind of writing would have been the favourite topic of criticiſm, and that ſelf-love might have produced ſome regard for it, in thoſe authors that have crowded libraries with elaborate diſſertations upon *Homer*; ſince to afford a ſubject for heroick poems is the privilege of very few, but every man may expect to be recorded in an epitaph, and therefore finds ſome intereſt in providing that his memory may not ſuffer by an unſkilful panegyrick.

IF our prejudices in favour of antiquity deſerve to have any part in the regulation of our ſtudies, EPITAPHS ſeem intitled to more than common regard, as they are probably of the ſame age with the art of writing. The moſt ancient ſtructures in the world, the Pyramids, are ſuppoſed to be ſepulchral monuments, which either pride or gratitude erected; and the ſame paſſions which incited men to ſuch laborious and expenſive methods of preſerving their own memory, or that of their benefactors, would doubtleſs incline them not to neglect any eaſier means by which the ſame ends

ends might be obtained. Nature and reaſon have dictated to every nation, that to preſerve good actions from oblivion, is both the intereſt and duty of mankind: and therefore we find no people acquainted with the uſe of letters, that omitted to grace the tombs of their heroes and wiſe men with panegyrical inſcriptions.

To examine, therefore, in what the perfection of EPITAPHS conſiſts, and what rules are to be obſerved in compoſing them, will be at leaſt of as much uſe as other critical enquiries; and for aſſigning a few hours to ſuch diſquiſitions, great examples at leaſt, if not ſtrong reaſons, may be pleaded.

AN EPITAPH, as the word itſelf implies, is an *inſcription on the tomb*, and in its moſt extenſive import may admit indiſcriminately ſatire or praiſe. But as malice has ſeldom produced monuments of defamation, and the tombs hitherto raiſed have been the work of friendſhip and benevolence, cuſtom has contracted the original latitude of the *word*, ſo that it ſignifies in the general acceptation an *inſcription engraven on a tomb in honour of the perſon deceaſed*.

As honours are paid to the dead in order to incite others to the imitation of their excellences, the principal intention of EPITAPHS is to perpetuate the examples of virtue, that the tomb of a good man may ſupply the want of his preſence, and veneration for his memory produce the ſame effect as the obſervation of his life. Thoſe EPITAPHS are, therefore, the moſt perfect, which ſet virtue in the ſtrongeſt light, and are beſt adapted to exalt the reader's ideas and rouſe his emulation.

To this end it is not always neceſſary to recount the actions of a hero, or enumerate the writings of a Philoſopher; to imagine ſuch informations neceſſary, is to detract from their characters, or to ſuppoſe their works mortal, or their atchievements in danger of being forgotten. The bare name of ſuch men anſwers every purpoſe of a long inſcription.

HAD only the name of Sir ISAAC NEWTON being ſubjoined to the deſign upon his monument, inſtead of a long detail of his diſcoveries, which no Philoſopher can want, and which none but a Philoſopher can underſtand, thoſe, by whoſe direction it was

raiſed, had done more honour both to him and to themſelves.

THIS indeed is a commendation which it requires no genius to beſtow, but which can never become vulgar or contemptible, if beſtowed with judgement; becauſe no ſingle age produces many men of merit ſuperior to panegyrick. None but the firſt names can ſtand unaſſiſted againſt the attacks of time; and if men raiſed to reputation by accident or caprice, have nothing but their names engraved on their tombs, there is danger leſt in a few years the inſcription require an interpreter. Thus have their expectations been diſappointed who honoured *Picus* of *Mirandola* with this pompous epitaph.

Hic ſitus eſt PICUS MIRANDOLA, cætera nount
Et Tagus et Ganges, forſan et Antipodes.

His name, then celebrated in the remoteſt corners of the earth, is now almoſt forgotten; and his works, then ſtudied, admired, and applauded, are now mouldering in obſcurity.

NEXT in dignity to the bare name is a ſhort character ſimple and unadorned, without exaggeration, ſuperlatives, or rhetoric. Such were the inſcriptions in uſe among the *Ro-*

mans, in which the victories gained by their emperors were commemorated by a ſingle epithet; as Cæſar *Germanicus*, Cæſar *Dacicus*, *Germanicus*, *Illyricus*. Such would be this epitaph, ISAACUS NEWTONUS, *naturæ legibus inveſtigatis, hic quieſcit.*

BUT to far the greateſt part of mankind a longer encomium is neceſſary for the publication of their virtues, and the preſervation of their memories; and in the compoſition of theſe it is that art is principally required, and precepts therefore may be uſeful.

IN writing EPITAPHS, one circumſtance is to be conſidered, which affects no other compoſition; the place in which they are now commonly found reſtrains them to a particular air of ſolemnity, and debars them from the admiſſion of all lighter or gayer ornaments. In this it is that the ſtyle of an EPITAPH neceſſarily differs from that of an ELEGY. The cuſtom of burying our dead either in or near our churches, perhaps originally founded on a rational deſign of fitting the mind for religious exerciſes, by laying before it the moſt affecting proof of the uncertainty of life, makes it proper to exclude from our EPITAPHS all

ſuch

ſuch alluſions as are contrary to the doctrines for the propagation of which the churches are erected, and to the end for which thoſe who peruſe the monuments muſt be ſuppoſed to come thither. Nothing is, therefore, more ridiculous than to copy the *Roman* inſcriptions, which were engraven on ſtones by the high-way, and compoſed by thoſe who generally reflected on mortality only to excite in themſelves and others a quicker reliſh of pleaſure, and a more luxurious enjoyment of life, and whoſe regard for the dead extended no farther than a wiſh that *the earth might be light upon them.*

ALL alluſions to the heathen mythology are therefore abſurd, and all regard for the ſenſeleſs remains of a dead man impertinent and ſuperſtitious. One of the firſt diſtinctions of the primitive Chriſtians, was their neglect of beſtowing garlands on the dead, in which they are very rationally defended by their apologiſt in *Minutius Felix*. "We laviſh no "flowers nor odours on the dead," ſays he, "becauſe they have no ſenſe of fragrance or of "beauty." We profeſs to reverence the dead, not for their ſake, but for our own. It is

therefore always with indignation or contempt that I read the epitaph on *Cowley*, a man, whoſe learning and poetry were his loweſt merits.

Aurea dum late volitant tua ſcripta per orbem
Et fama eternum vivis, divine Poeta,
Hic placida jaceas requie, cuſtodiat urnam
Cana, Fides, vigilent que perenni Lampade Muſæ!
Sit ſacer ille locus, nec quis temerarius auſit
Sacrilega turbare manu venerabile buſtum,
Intacti maneant, maneant per ſæcula dulces.
COWLEII cineres, ſerventque immobile Saxum.

To pray that the aſhes of a friend may lie undiſturbed, and that the Divinities that favoured him in his life, may watch for ever round him to preſerve his tomb from violation, and drive ſacrilege away, is only rational in him who believes the ſoul intereſted in the repoſe of the body, and the powers which he invokes for its protection able to preſerve it. To cenſure ſuch expreſſions as contrary to religion, or as remains of heathen ſuperſtition, would be too great a degree of ſeverity. I condemn them only as uninſtructive and unaffecting, as too ludicrous for reverence or grief, for chriſtianity and a temple.

THAT

THAT the deſigns and decorations of monuments ought likewiſe to be formed with the ſame regard to the ſolemnity of the place, cannot be denied: it is an eſtabliſhed principle, that all ornaments owe their beauty to their propriety. The ſame glitter of dreſs that adds graces to gaiety and youth, would make age and dignity contemptible. *Charon* with his boat is far from heightening the awful grandeur of the univerſal judgement, though drawn by *Angelo* himſelf; nor is it eaſy to imagine a greater abſurdity than that of gracing the walls of a chriſtian temple with the figure of *Mars* leading a hero to battle, or *Cupids* ſporting rounds a virgin. The pope who defaced the ſtatues of the Deities at the tomb of *Sannazarius* is, in my opinion, more eaſily to be defended, than he that erected them.

IT is for the ſame reaſon improper to addreſs the EPITAPH to the paſſenger, a cuſtom which an injudicious veneration for antiquity introduced again at the revival of letters, and which, among many others, *Paſſeratius* ſuffered to miſlead him in his EPITAPH upon the heart of *Henry* king of *France*, who was

ſtabbed by *Clement* the monk, which yet deſerves to be inſerted, for the ſake of ſhewing how beautiful even improprieties may become, in the hands of a good writer.

Adſta, Viator, et dole regum vices.
Cor Regis iſto conditur ſub marmore,
Qui jura Gallis, jura Sarmatis dedit.
Tectus Cucullo hunc ſuſtulit Sicarius.
Abi, Viator, et dole regum vices,

IN the Monkiſh ages, however ignorant and unpoliſhed, the EPITAPHS were drawn up with far greater propriety than can be ſhewn in thoſe which more enlightened times have produced.

Orate pro Anima—miſerrimi Peccatoris,

was an addreſs to the laſt degree ſtriking and ſolemn, as it flowed naturally from the religion then believed, and awakened in the reader ſentiments of benevolence for the deceaſed, and of concern for his own happineſs. There was nothing trifling or ludicrous, nothing that did not tend to the nobleſt end, the propagation of piety and the increaſe of devotion.

IT may ſeem very ſuperfluous to lay it down as the firſt rule for writing EPITAPHS, that the

the name of the deceaſed is not to be omitted; nor ſhould I have thought ſuch a precept neceſſary, had not the practice of the greateſt writers ſhewn, that it has not been ſufficiently regarded. In moſt of the poetical EPITAPHS, the names for whom they were compoſed may be ſought to no purpoſe, being only prefixed on the monument. To expoſe the abſurdity of this omiſſion, it is only neceſſary to aſk how the EPITAPHS, which have outlived the ſtones on which they were inſcribed, would have contributed to the information of poſterity, had they wanted the names of thoſe whom they celebrated.

IN drawing the character of the deceaſed, there are no rules to be obſerved which do not equally relate to other compoſitions. The praiſe ought not to be general, becauſe the mind is loſt in the extent of any indefinite idea, and cannot be affected with what it cannot comprehend. When we hear only of a good or great man, we know not in what claſs to place him, nor have any notion of his character, diſtinct from that of a thouſand others; his example can have no effect upon our conduct, as we have nothing remarkable or

eminent to propoſe to our imitation. The EPITAPH compoſed by *Ennius* for his own tomb, has both the faults laſt mentioned,

Nemo me decoret lacrumis, nec funera, fletu
Faxit. Cur? volito vivu' per ora virum.

THE reader of this EPITAPH receives ſcarce any idea from it; he neither conceives any veneration for the man to whom it belongs, nor is inſtructed by what methods this boaſted reputation is to be obtained.

THOUGH a ſepulchral inſcription is profeſſedly a panegyric, and, therefore, not confined to hiſtorical impartiality, yet it ought always to be written with regard to truth. No man ought to be commended for virtues which he never poſſeſſed, but whoever is curious to know his faults muſt enquire after them in other places; the monuments of the dead are not intended to perpetuate the memory of crimes, but to exhibit patterns of virtue. On the tomb of *Mæcenas*, his luxury is not to be mentioned with his munificence, nor is the proſcription to find a place on the monument of *Auguſtus*.

THE

THE beſt ſubject for EPITAPHS is private virtue; virtue exerted in the ſame circumſtances in which the bulk of mankind are placed, and which, therefore, may admit of many imitators. He that has delivered his country from oppreſſion, or freed the world from ignorance and error, can excite the emulation of a very ſmall number; but he that has repelled the temptations of poverty, and diſdained to free himſelf from diſtreſs at the expence of his virtue, may animate multitudes, by his example, to the ſame firmneſs of heart and ſteadineſs of reſolution.

OF this kind I cannot forbear the mention of two *Greek* inſcriptions; one upon a man whoſe writings are well known, the other upon a perſon whoſe memory is preſerved only in her EPITAPH, who both lived in ſlavery, the moſt calamitous eſtate in human life.

Ζωσιμη ἡ πριν εσσα μονω τω ζωματι δουλη,
Και τω ζωματι νυν ευρεν ελευθεριην.

ZOSIMA, quæ ſolo fuit olim corpore Serva,
Corpore nunc etiam libera facta fuit.

"ZOSIMA, who in her life could only have her body enſlaved, now finds her body likewiſe ſet at liberty."

IT is impoſſible to read this EPITAPH without being animated to bear the evils of life with conſtancy, and to ſupport the dignity of human nature under the moſt preſſing afflictions, both by the example of the heroine, whoſe grave we behold, and the proſpect of that ſtate in which, to uſe the language of the inſpired writers, "The poor ceaſe from their labours, and the "weary be at reſt."——

THE other is upon *Epictetus*, the Stoic Philoſopher.

Δουλος Επικτητος γενομην, και χωμ' αναπηρος;
Και πενιην Ιρος, και φιλος Αθανατοις.

Servus *Epictetus*, mutilatus corpore vixi
Pauperieque Irus, curaque prima Deum.

"EPICTETUS, who lies here, was a ſlave and a cripple, poor as the beggar in the proverb, and the favourite of Heaven."

IN this diſtich is compriſed the nobleſt panegyric, and the moſt important inſtruction. We may learn from it that virtue is impracticable in no condition, ſince *Epictetus* could recommend himſelf to the regard of Heaven, amidſt the temptations of poverty and ſlavery:

ſlavery, which has always been found ſo deſtructive to virtue, that in many languages a ſlave and a thief are expreſſed by the ſame word. And we may be likewiſe admoniſhed by it, not to lay any ſtreſs on a man's outward circumſtances, in making an eſtimate of his real value, ſince *Epictetus* the beggar, the cripple, and the ſlave, was the favourite of Heaven.

A DIS-

A

DISSERTATION

ON THE

EPITAPHS written by POPE;

Originally printed in the VISITOR.

EVERY art is beſt taught by example. Nothing contributes more to the cultivation of propriety than remarks on the works of thoſe who have moſt excelled. I ſhall therefore endeavour at this viſit to entertain the young ſtudents in poetry, with an examination of *Pope's Epitaphs*.

To define an *epitaph* is uſeleſs; every one knows that it is an inſcription on a tomb. An epitaph, therefore, implies no particular character of writing, but may be compoſed in verſe or proſe. It is indeed commonly panegyrical, becauſe we are ſeldom diſtinguiſhed with a ſtone, but by our friends; but it has no rule

rule to reſtrain or modify it, except this, that it ought not to be longer than common beholders may be expected to have leiſure and patience to peruſe.

I.

On CHARLES *Earl of* DORSET, *in the Church of* Wythyham *in* Suſſex.

DORSET, the grace of courts, the Muſe's pride,
Patron of arts, and judge of nature, dy'd.
The ſcourge of pride, tho' ſanctify'd or great,
Of fops in learning, and of knaves in ſtate;
Yet ſoft his nature, tho' ſevere his lay,
His anger moral, and his wiſdom gay.
Bleſt ſatyriſt! who touch'd the mean ſo true,
As ſhow'd, vice had his hate and pity too.
Bleſt courtier! who could king and country pleaſe,
Yet ſacred keep his friendſhips, and his eaſe.
Bleſt peer! his great forefathers every grace
Reflecting, and reflected on his race;
Where other Buckhurſts, other Dorſets ſhine,
And patriots ſtill, or poets, deck the line."

THE firſt diſtich of this epitaph contains a kind of information which few would want, that

that the man for whom the tomb was erected, *died*. There are indeed ſome qualities worthy of praiſe aſcribed to the dead, but none that were likely to exempt him from the lot of man, or incline us much to wonder that he ſhould die. What is meant by *judge of nature*, is not eaſy to ſay. Nature is not the object of human judgement, for it is vain to judge where we cannot alter. If by nature is meant, what is commonly called *nature* by the critics, a juſt repreſentation of things really exiſting, and actions really performed, nature cannot be properly oppoſed to *art*; nature being, in this ſenſe, only the beſt effect of *art*.

The ſcourge of pride ———

Of this couplet, the ſecond line is not, what is intended, an illuſtration of the former. *Pride*, in the *Great*, is indeed well enough connected with knaves in ſtate, though *knaves* is a word rather too ludicrous and light; but the mention of *ſanctified* pride will not lead the thoughts to *fops in learning*, but rather to ſome ſpecies of tyranny or oppreſſion, ſomething more gloomy and more formidable than foppery.

Yet ſoft his nature——

THIS is a high compliment, but was not firſt beſtowed on *Dorſet* by *Pope*. The next verſe is extremely beautiful.

Bleſt ſatyriſt!——

IN this diſtich is another line of which *Pope* was not the author. I do not mean to blame theſe imitations with much harſhneſs; in long performances they are ſcarcely to be avoided, and in ſhorter they may be indulged, becauſe the train of the compoſition may naturally involve them, or the ſcantineſs of the ſubject allow little choice. However, what is borrowed is not to be enjoyed as our own; and it is the buſineſs of critical juſtice to give every bird of the Muſes his proper feather.

Bleſt courtier!——

WHETHER a courtier can properly be commended for keeping his *eaſe ſacred*, may perhaps be diſputable. To pleaſe king and country, without ſacrificing friendſhip to any change of times, was a very uncommon inſtance of prudence or felicity, and deſerved to be kept ſeparate from ſo poor a commendation as care of this eaſe. I wiſh our poets would attend

attend a little more accurately to the uſe of the word *ſacred*, which ſurely ſhould never be applied in a ſerious compoſition, but where ſome reference may be made to a higher Being, or where ſome duty is exacted or implied. A man may keep his friendſhip *ſacred*, becauſe promiſes of friendſhip are very awful ties; but methinks he cannot, but in a burleſque ſenſe, be ſaid to keep his eaſe *ſacred*.

Bleſt peer!——

THE bleſſing aſcribed to the *peer* has no connection with his peerage; they might happen to any other man, whoſe anceſtors were remembered, or whoſe poſterity were likely to be regarded.

I know not whether this epitaph be worthy either of the writer, or of the man entombed.

II.

On Sir WILLIAM TRUMBAL, *one of the Principal Secretaries of State to King* William III. *who, having reſigned his place, died in his Retirement at* Eaſthamſted *in* Berkſhire, 1716.

A pleaſing form, a firm, yet cautious mind,
Sincere, tho' prudent; conſtant, yet reſign'd;

Honour

Honour unchang'd, a principle profeſt,
Fix'd to one ſide, but moderate to the reſt:
An honeſt courtier, yet a patriot too,
Juſt to his prince, and to his country true.
Fill'd with the ſenſe of age, the fire of youth,
A ſcorn of wrangling, yet a zeal for truth;
A generous faith, from ſuperſtition free;
A love to peace, and hate of tyranny;
Such this man was; who now, from earth remov'd,
At length enjoys that liberty he lov'd.

In this epitaph, as in many others, there appears, at the firſt view, a fault which I think ſcarcely any beauty can compenſate. The name is omitted. The end of an epitaph is to convey ſome account of the dead, and to what purpoſe is any thing told of him whoſe name is concealed? An epitaph, and a hiſtory, of a nameleſs hero, are equally abſurd, ſince the virtues and qualities ſo recounted in either, are ſcattered at the mercy of fortune to be appropriated by gueſs. The name, it is true, may be read upon the ſtone; but what obligation has it to the poet, whoſe verſes wander over the earth, and leave their ſubject behind them, and who is forced, like an unſkilful painter, to make his purpoſe known by adventitious help?

This

THIS epitaph is wholly without elevation, and contains nothing ſtrking or particular; but the poet is not to be blamed for the defects of his ſubject. He ſaid perhaps the beſt that could be ſaid. There are, however, ſome defects which were not made neceſſary by the character in which he was employed. There is no oppoſition between an *honeſt courtier* and a *patriot*, for an *honeſt courtier* cannot but be a *patriot*.

IT was unſuitable to the nicety required in ſhort compoſitions to cloſe his verſe with the word *too*; every rhyme ſhould be a word of emphaſis, nor can this rule be ſafely neglected, except where the length of the poem makes ſlight inaccuracies excuſable, or allows room for beauties ſufficient to over-power the effects of petty faults.

AT the beginning of the ſeventh line the word *filled* is weak and proſaic, having no particular adaptation to any of the words that follow it.

THE thought in the laſt line is impertinent, having no connexion with the foregoing character, nor with the condition of the man deſcribed.

ſcribed. Had the epitaph been written on the poor conſpirator * who died lately in priſon after a confinement of more than forty years, without any crime proved againſt him, the ſentiment had been juſt and pathetical; but why ſhould *Trumbal* be congratulated upon his liberty, who had never known reſtraint?

III.

On the Hon. SIMON HARCOURT, *only Son of the Lord Chancellor* HARCOURT; *at the Church of* Stanton-Harcourt *in* Oxfordſhire, 1720.

To this ſad ſhrine, whoe'er thou art! draw near,
Here lies the friend moſt lov'd, the ſon moſt dear:
Who ne'er knew joy, but friendſhip might divide,
Or gave his father grief but when he dy'd.

How vain is reaſon, eloquence how weak!
If *Pope* muſt tell what *Harcourt* cannot ſpeak.
Oh, let thy once-lov'd friend inſcribe thy ſtone,
And, with a father's ſorrows, mix his own.

THIS epitaph is principally remarkable for the artful introduction of the name, which is inſerted with a peculiar felicity, to which chance muſt concur with genius, which no man can hope to attain twice, and which cannot be copied but with ſervile imitation.

* Bernardi.

I cannot

I cannot but wiſh that, of this inſcription, the two laſt lines had been omitted, as they take away from the energy what they do not add to the ſenſe.

IV.

On JAMES CRAGGS, *Eſq*; *In* Weſtminſter-Abbey.

JACOBUS CRAGGS

REGI MAGNAE BRITANNIAE A SECRETIS
ET CONSILIIS SANCTIORIBUS,
PRINCIPIS PARITER AC POPULI AMOR ET
DELICIAE:
VIXIT TITULIS ET INVIDIA MAJOR,
ANNOS HEU PAUCOS XXXV.
OB. FEB. XVI. MDCCXX.

Stateſman, yet friend to truth! of ſoul ſincere,
In action faithful, and in honour clear!
Who broke no promiſe, ſerv'd no private end,
Who gain'd no title, and who loſt no friend,
Ennobled by himſelf, by all approv'd,
Prais'd, wept, and honour'd, by the Muſe he lov'd.

THE lines on *Craggs* were not originally intended for an epitaph, and therefore ſome faults are to be imputed to the violence with which they are torn from the poem that firſt contained

contained them. We may, however, obſerve ſome defects. There is a redundancy of words in the firſt couplet; it is ſuperfluous to tell of him, who was *ſincere*, *true*, and *faithful*, that he was in *honour clear*.

THERE ſeems to be an oppoſition intended in the fourth line, which is not very obvious: where is the wonder, that he *gained no title*, and *loſt no friend?*

IT may be proper here to remark the abſurdity of joining, in the ſame inſcription, *Latin* and *Engliſh*, or verſe and proſe. If either language be preferable to the other, let that only be uſed; for no reaſon can be given why part of the information ſhould be given in one tongue and part in another, on a tomb, more than in any other place, or any other occaſion; and to tell all that can be conveniently told in verſe, and then to call in the help of proſe, has always the appearance of a very artleſs expedient, or of an attempt unaccompliſhed. Such an epitaph reſembles the converſation of a foreigner, who tells part of his meaning by words, and conveys part by ſigns.

V. *In-*

V.

Intended for Mr. ROWE.
In Weſtminſter-Abbey.

Thy reliques, *Rowe*, to this fair urn we truſt,
And, ſacred, place by *Dryden's* awful duſt:
Beneath a rude and nameleſs ſtone he lies,
To which thy tomb ſhall guide enquiring eyes.
Peace to thy gentle ſhade, and endleſs reſt!
Bleſt in thy genius, in thy love too bleſt!
One grateful woman to thy fame ſupplies
What a whole thankleſs land to his denies.

OF this inſcription the chief fault is, that it belongs leſs to *Rowe*, for whom it was written, than to *Dryden*, who was buried near him; and indeed gives very little information concerning either.

THE wiſh, *peace to thy ſhade*, is too mythological to be admitted into a chriſtian temple; the ancient worſhip has infected almoſt all our other compoſitions, and might therefore be contented to ſpare our *epitaphs*. Let fiction, at leaſt, ceaſe with life, and let us be ſerious over the grave.

VI.

On Mrs. CORBET,
who died of a Cancer in her Breaſt.

Here reſts a woman, good without pretence,
Bleſt with plain reaſon, and with ſober ſenſe;

No

No conqueſts ſhe, but o'er herſelf deſir'd,
No arts eſſay'd, but not to be admir'd.
Paſſion and pride were to her ſoul unknown,
Convinc'd that virtue only is our own.
So unaffected, ſo compos'd a mind,
So firm, yet ſoft, ſo ſtrong, yet ſo refin'd,
Heaven as its pureſt gold, by tortures try'd,
The ſaint ſuſtain'd it, but the woman dy'd.

I have always conſidered this as the moſt valuable of all *Pope's* epitaphs: the ſubject of it is a character not diſcriminated by any ſhining or eminent peculiarities; yet that which really makes, though not the ſplendor, the felicity of life, and that which every wiſe man will chuſe for his final and laſting companion in the languor of age, in the quiet of privacy, when he departs weary and diſguſted from the oſtentatious, the volatile, and the vain. Of ſuch a character, which the dull overlook, and the gay deſpiſe, it was fit that the value ſhould be made known, and the dignity eſtabliſhed. Domeſtic virtue, as it is exerted without great occaſions, or conſpicuous conſequences, in an even unnoted tenor, required the genius of *Pope* to diſplay it in ſuch a manner as might attract regard, and enforce reverence. Who can forbear to

lament that this amiable woman has no name in the verſes?

If the particular lines of this inſcription be examined, it will appear leſs faulty than the reſt. There is ſcarce one line taken from common places, unleſs it be that in which *only virtue* is ſaid to be *our own*. I once heard a lady of great beauty and elegance object to the fourth line, that it contained an unnatural and incredible panegyrick. Of this let the ladies judge.

VII.

On the Monument of the Hon. ROBERT DIGBY *and of his Siſter* MARY, *erected by their Father the Lord* DIGBY, *in the Church of* Sherborne *in* Dorſetſhire, 1727.

Go! fair example of untainted youth,
Of modeſt wiſdom, and pacifick truth:
Compos'd in ſufferings, and in joy ſedate,
Good without noiſe, without pretenſion great.
Juſt of thy word, in every thought ſincere,
Who knew no wiſh but what the world might hear:
Of ſofteſt manners, unaffected mind,
Lover of peace, and friend of human kind:
Go, live! for Heaven's eternal year is thine,
Go, and exalt thy mortal to divine.
And thou, bleſt maid! attendant on his doom,
Penſive haſt follow'd to the ſilent tomb,
Steer'd the ſame courſe to the ſame quiet ſhore,
Not parted long, and now to part no more!

Go,

Go, then, where only bliſs ſincere is known!
Go, where to love and to enjoy are one!
Yet take theſe tears, mortality's relief;
And till we ſhare your joys, forgive our grief:
Theſe little rites, a ſtone, a verſe receive,
'Tis all a father, all a friend can give.

THIS epitaph contains of the brother, only a general indiſcriminate character, and of the ſiſter tells nothing but that ſhe died. The difficulty in writing epitaphs is to give a particular and appropriate praiſe. This, however, is not always to be performed, whatever be the dilgence or ability of the writer; for the greater part of mankind *have no character at all*, have little that diſtinguiſhes them from others equally good or bad, and therefore nothing can be ſaid of them which may not be applied with equal propriety to a thouſand more. It is indeed no great panegyrick, that there is incloſed in this tomb one who was born in one year, and died in another; yet many uſeful and amiable lives have been ſpent, which yet leave little materials for any other memorial. Theſe are however not the proper ſubjects of poetry; and whenever friendſhip, or any other motive, obliges a poet to write on ſuch ſubjects, he muſt be forgiven if he ſometimes wanders in gene-

ralities, and utters the ſame praiſes over different tombs.

THE ſcantineſs of human praiſes can ſcarcely be made more apparent, than by remarking how often *Pope* has, in the few epitaphs which he compoſed, found it neceſſary to borrow from himſelf. The fourteen epitaphs which he has written, compriſe about an hundred and forty lines, in which there are more repetitions than will eaſily be found in all the reſt of his works. In the eight lines which make the character of *Digby*, there is ſcarce any thought, or word, which may not be found in the other epitaphs.

THE ninth line, which is far the ſtrongeſt and moſt elegant, is borrowed from *Dryden*. The concluſion is the ſame with that on *Harcourt*, but is here more elegant and better connected.

VIII.

On Sir GODFREY KNELLER.

In Weſtminſter-Abbey, 1723.

KNELLER, by heaven, and not a maſter taught,
Whoſe art was nature, and whoſe pictures thought;
Now

Now for two ages, having ſnatch'd from fate
Whate'er was beauteous, or whate'er was great,
Lies crown'd with princes honours, poets lays,
Due to his merit, and brave thirſt of praiſe.
Living, great Nature fear'd, he might outvie
Her works; and, dying, fears herſelf may die.

OF this epitaph, the firſt couplet is good, the ſecond not bad; the third is deformed with a broken metaphor, the word *crowned* not being applicable to the *honours* or the *lays*; and the fourth is entirely borrowed from the epitaph in Raphael, but of very harſh conſtruction.

IX.

On General HENRY WITHERS.

In Weſtminſter-Abbey, 1729.

Here, WITHERS, reſt! thou braveſt, gentleſt mind,
Thy country's friend, but more of human kind;
O! born to arms! O! worth in youth approv'd!
O! ſoft humanity, in age belov'd!
For thee the hardy veteran drops a tear,
And the gay courtier feels the ſigh ſincere.
WITHERS, adieu! yet not with thee remove
Thy martial ſpirit, or thy ſocial love!
Amidſt corruption, luxury, and rage,
Still leave ſome ancient virtues to our age:
Nor let us ſay (thoſe *Engliſh* glories gone)
The laſt true *Briton* lies beneath this ſtone.

THE epitaph on *Withers* affords another inſtance of common places, though ſomewhat diverſified by mingled qualities, and the peculiarity of a profeſſion.

THE ſecond couplet is abrupt, general, and unpleaſing; exclamation ſeldom ſucceeds in our language; and I think it may be obſerved, that the particle O! uſed at the beginning of a ſentence, always offends.

THE third couplet is more happy; the value expreſſed for him, by different ſorts of men, raiſes him to eſteem; there is yet ſomething of the common cant of ſuperficial ſatiriſts, who ſuppoſe that the inſincerity of a courtier deſtroys all his ſenſations, and that he is equally a diſſembler to the living and the dead.

AT the third couplet I ſhould wiſh the epitaph to cloſe, but that I ſhould be unwilling to loſe the two next lines, which yet are dearly bought if they cannot be retained without the four that follow them.

X.

On Mr. ELIJAH FENTON.
At Eaſthamſted *in* Berkſhire, 1730.

This modeſt ſtone, what few vain marbles can,
May truly ſay, Here lies an honeſt man:
A poet bleſt beyond the poet's fate,
Whom Heaven kept ſacred from the Proud and Great;
Foe to loud praiſe, and friend to learned eaſe,
Content with ſcience in the vale of peace.
Calmly he look'd on either life, and here
Saw nothing to regret, or there to fear;
From Nature's temperate feaſt roſe ſatisfy'd,
Thank'd Heaven that he had liv'd, and that he dy'd.

THE firſt couplet of this epitaph is borrowed from *Craſhaw*. The four next lines contain a ſpecies of praiſe peculiar, original, and juſt. Here, therefore, the inſcription ſhould have ended, the latter part containing nothing but what is common to every man who is wiſe and good. The character of *Fenton* was ſo amiable, that I cannot forbear to wiſh for ſome poet or biographer to diſplay it more fully for the advantage of poſterity. If he did not ſtand in the firſt rank of genius, he may claim a place in the ſecond; and, whatever criticiſm may object to his writings, cenſure could find very little to blame in his life.

XI.

On Mr. GAY. *In* Weſtminſter-Abbey, 1732.

Of manners gentle, of affections mild;
In wit, a man; ſimplicity, a child;
With native humour tempering virtuous rage,
Form'd to delight at once and laſh the age:
Above temptation in a low eſtate,
And uncorrupted, ev'n among the Great:
A ſafe companion, and an eaſy friend,
Unblam'd through life, lamented in thy end.
Theſe are thy honours! not that here thy buſt
Is mix'd with heroes, or with kings thy duſt;
But that the Worthy and the Good ſhall ſay,
Striking their penſive boſoms—*Here lies* GAY.

As *Gay* was the favourite of our author, this epitaph was probably written with an uncommon degree of attention; yet it is not more ſucceſsfully executed than the reſt; for it will not always happen that the ſucceſs of a poet is proportionate to his labour. The ſame obſervation may be extended to all works of imagination, which are often influenced by cauſes wholly out of the performer's power, by hints of which he perceives not the origin, by ſudden elevations of mind which he cannot produce in himſelf, and which ſometimes riſe when he expects them leaſt.

THE

THE two parts of the firſt line are only echoes of each other; *gentle manners* and *mild affections*, if they mean any thing, muſt mean the ſame.

THAT *Gay* was a *man in wit* is a very frigid commendation; to have the wit of a man is not much for a Poet. The *wit of man*, and the *ſimplicity of a child*, make a poor and vulgar contraſt, and raiſe no ideas of excellence, either intellectual or moral.

IN the next couplet *rage* is leſs properly introduced after the mention of *mildneſs* and *gentleneſs*, which are made the conſtituents of his character; for a man ſo *mild* and *gentle* to *temper* his rage, was not difficult.

THE next line is unharmonious in its ſound, and mean in its conception; the oppoſition is obvious; and the word *laſh* uſed abſolutely, and without any modification, is groſs and improper.

To be *above temptation* in poverty, and *free from corruption among the Great*, is indeed ſuch a peculiarity as deſerved notice. But to be a *ſafe companion* is praiſe merely negative, ariſing not from the poſſeſſion of virtue, but the

abſence of vice, and that one of the moſt odious.

As little can be added to his character, by aſſerting that he was *lamented in his end.* Every man that dies is, at leaſt by the writer of his epitaph, ſuppoſed to be lamented, and therefore this general lamentation does no honour to *Gay.*

THE eight firſt lines have no grammar, the adjectives are without any ſubſtantive, and the epithets without a ſubject.

THE thought in the laſt line, that *Gay* is buried in the boſoms of the *worthy* and the *good*, who are diſtinguiſhed only to lengthen the line, is ſo dark that few underſtand it; and ſo harſh, when it is explained, that ſtill fewer approve.

XII.

Intended for Sir ISAAC NEWTON.
In Weſtminſter-Abbey.

ISAACUS NEWTONIUS:
Quem Immortalem
Teſtantur *Tempus, Natura, Cœlum:*
Mortalem
Hoc marmor fatetur.

Nature, and Nature's laws, lay hid in night:
GOD ſaid, *Let Newton be!* And all was light.

OF this epitaph, ſhort as it is, the faults ſeems not to be very few, Why part ſhould be *Latin* and part *Engliſh*, it is not eaſy to diſcover. In the *Latin*, the oppoſition of *immortalis* and *mortalis*, is a mere ſound, or a mere quibble; he is not immortal in any ſenſe contrary to that in which he is *mortal*.

IN the verſes the thought is obvious, and the words *night* and *light* are too nearly allied.

XIII.

On EDMUND *Duke of* Buckingham, *who died in the* 19*th Year of his Age*, 1735.

If modeſt youth, with cool reflection crown'd,
And every opening virtue blooming round,
Could ſave a parent's juſteſt pride from fate,
Or add one patriot to a ſinking ſtate;
This weeping marble had not aſk'd thy tear,
Or ſadly told, how many hopes lie here:
The living virtue now had ſhone approv'd,
The ſenate heard him, and his country lov'd.
Yet ſofter honours, and leſs noiſy fame,
Attend the ſhade of gentle *Buckingham:*
In whom a race, for courage fam'd and art,
Ends in the milder merit of the heart;
And, chiefs or ſages long to *Britain* given,
Pays the laſt tribute of a ſaint to heaven.

THIS epitaph Mr. *Warburton* prefers to the reſt, but I know not for what reaſon.

To *crown* with *reflection* is ſurely a mode of ſpeech approaching to nonſenſe. *Opening virtue blooming round*, ſomething like tautology; the ſix following lines are poor and proſaic. *Art* is another couplet uſed for arts, that a rhyme may be had to *heart*. The ſix laſt lines are the beſt, but not excellent.

THE reſt of his ſepulchral performances hardly deſerve the notice of criticiſm. The contemptible *Dialogue* between HE and SHE, ſhould have been ſuppreſſed for the author's ſake.

IN his laſt epitaph on himſelf, in which he attempts to be jocular upon one of the few things that make wiſe men ſerious, he confounds the living man with the dead:

"Under this ſtone, or under this ſill,
"Or under this turf, &c."

WHEN a man is once buried, the queſtion under what he is buried, is eaſily decided. He forgot that though he wrote the epitaph in a ſtate of uncertainty, yet it could not be laid over him till his grave was made. Such is the folly of wit when it is ill employed.

THE

THE world has but little new; even this wretchedneſs ſeems to have been borrowed from the following tuneleſs lines:

Ludovici Areoſti humantur oſſa
Sub hoc marmore, vel ſub hac humo, ſeu
Sub quicquid voluit benignus hæres
Sive hærede benignior comes, ſeu
Opportunius incidens Viator;
Nam ſcire haud potuit futura, ſed nec
Tanti erat vacuum ſibi cadaver
Ut utnam cuperet parare vivens,
Vivens iſta tamen ſibi paravit.
Quæ inſcribi voluit ſuo ſepulchro
Olim ſiquod haberetis ſepulchrum.

Surely Arioſto did not venture to expect that his trifle would have ever had ſuch an illuſtrious imitator.

THE

THE BRAVERY OF THE Engliſh Common Soldiers.

BY thoſe who have compared the military genius of the *Engliſh* with that of the *French* nation, it is remarked, that *the French officers will always lead, if the ſoldiers will follow*; and that *the Engliſh ſoldiers will always follow, if their officers will lead.*

In all pointed ſentences, ſome degree of accuracy muſt be ſacrificed to conciſeneſs; and, in this compariſon, our officers ſeem to loſe what our ſoldiers gain. I know not any reaſon, for ſuppoſing that the *Engliſh* officers are leſs willing than the *French* to lead; but it is, I think, univerſally allowed, that the *Engliſh* ſoldiers are more willing to follow. Our nation may boaſt, beyond any other people

ple in the world, of a kind of epidemick bravery, diffuſed equally through all its ranks. We can ſhew a peaſantry of heroes, and fill our armies with clowns, whoſe courage may vie with that of their general.

THERE may be ſome pleaſure in tracing the cauſes of this plebeian magnanimity. The qualities which commonly make an army formidable, are long habits of regularity, great exactneſs of diſcipline, and great confidence in the commander. Regularity may, in time, produce a kind of mechanical obedience to ſignals and commands, like that which the perverſe *Carteſians* impute to animals; diſcipline may impreſs ſuch an awe upon the mind, that any danger ſhall be leſs dreaded than the danger of puniſhment; and confidence in the wiſdom or fortune of the general, may induce the ſoldiers to follow him blindly to the moſt dangerous enterprize.

WHAT may be done by diſcipline and regularity, may be ſeen in the troops of the *Ruſſian* empreſs, and *Pruſſian* monarch. We find that they may be broken without confuſion, and repulſed without flight.

BUT the *Engliſh* troops have none of theſe requiſites in any eminent degree. Regularity is by no means part of their character: they are rarely exerciſed, and therefore ſhew very little dexterity in their evolutions as bodies of men, or in the manual uſe of their weapons as individuals; they neither are thought by others, nor by themſelves, more active or exact than their enemies, and therefore derive none of their courage from ſuch imaginary ſuperiority.

THE manner in which they are diſperſed in quarters over the country during times of peace, naturally produces laxity of diſcipline: they are very little in ſight of their officers; and, when they are not engaged in the ſlight duty of the guard, are ſuffered to live every man his own way.

THE equality of *Engliſh* privileges, the impartiality of our laws, the freedom of our tenures, and the proſperity of our trade, diſpoſe us very little to reverence of ſuperiors. It is not to any great eſteem of the officers that the *Engliſh* ſoldier is indebted for his ſpirit in the hour

hour of battle; for perhaps it does not often happen that he thinks much better of his leader than of himſelf. The *French* count, who has lately publiſhed the *Art of War*, remarks how much ſoldiers are animated, when they ſee all their dangers ſhared by thoſe who were born to be their maſters, and whom they conſider as beings of a different rank. The *Engliſhman* deſpiſes ſuch motives of courage: he was born without a maſter; and looks not on any man, however dignified by lace or titles, as deriving from nature any claims to his reſpect, or inheriting any qualities ſuperior to his own.

THERE are ſome, perhaps, who would imagine that every *Engliſhman* fights better than the ſubjects of abſolute governments, becauſe he has more to defend. But what has the *Engliſh* more than the *French* ſoldier? Property they are both commonly without. Liberty is, to the loweſt rank of every nation, little more than the choice of working or ſtarving; and this choice is, I ſuppoſe, equally allowed in every country. The *Engliſh* ſoldier ſeldom has his head very full of the conſtitution; nor

nor has there been, for more than a century, any war that put the property or liberty of a ſingle *Engliſhman* in danger.

WHENCE then is the courage of the *Engliſh* vulgar? It proceeds, in my opinion, from that diſſolution of dependance which obliges every man to regard his own character. While every man is fed by his own hands, he has no need of any ſervile arts: he may always have wages for his labour; and is no leſs neceſſary to his employer, than his employer is to him. While he looks for no protection from others, he is naturally rouſed to be his own protector; and having nothing to abate his eſteem of himſelf, he conſequently aſpires to the eſteem of others. Thus every man that crowds our ſtreets is a man of honour, diſdainful of obligation, impatient of reproach, and deſirous of extending his reputation among thoſe of his own rank; and as courage is in moſt frequent uſe, the fame of courage is moſt eagerly purſued. From this neglect of ſubordination I do not deny that ſome inconveniences may from time to time proceed: the power of the law does not always ſufficiently ſupply the want

want of reverence, or maintain the proper diſtinction betwen different ranks : but good and evil will grow up in this world together; and they who complain, in peace, of the inſolence of the populace, muſt remember, that their inſolence in peace is bravery in war.

THE END.